

A Musical History of the Arabs;

From the Days of Idolatry

to

The time of the Buwaihids.

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February, 1926.

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## Transliteration.

The system of transliteration recommended by the Anglo-Asiatic Society has been adopted generally, with the exception of the ligature for ش, which is written as sh.



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### Prefatory Note.

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The following plan had been adopted in these pages, with the exception of Chapter II. Each chapter is divided into three sections. The first deals with the social and political forces which determined the general musical culture. The second describes the musical life of the period, together with details of the theory and practice of music. It has been kept as free as possible from technicalities, but it is the intention of the writer to publish (this) thesis with an appendix containing a full treatment of the musical theory of the Arabs of this period. The third section is devoted to biographies of the famous composers, singers, instrumentalists, musical theorists and litterateurs.

H.G.F.

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### Transliteration.

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The system of transliteration recommended by the Royal Asiatic Society has been adopted generally, with the exception of the ligature for th (ث), kh (خ), dh (ذ), and sh (ش).



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## CHAPTER I.

### The Days of Idolatry.

(2nd to 6th century).

"Be content to listen to the singing-girl who delights us on a cloudy day".

'Abd al-Masīh ibn 'Asala, Al-Mufaddaliyyāt.

*we bade her:* "Now sing to us. Ay sing to us: we prayed her. And she, with monotony striking a low note slowly, <sup>hang</sup>chaunted unceasingly. O strange it was that cadence:; it came back the wail of it, grave as a mother's grieving the one son new-slain from her".

Tarafa, Al-Mu'allaqāt.

.....

For our knowledge of the general culture of the Arabs in the Days of Idolatry<sup>A</sup> we have to turn to the diwāns of poems such as the Mu'allaqāt, the Mufaddaliyyāt, the Hamāsa, the Akhbār al-lusūs, <sup>to</sup> the Jamharat ash'ar al-'arab, and above all ~~on~~ the monumental Kitāb al-aghānī of Abū'l-Faraj al-Isfahānī. In these works we can discern that not only in South Arabia, Al-Hijāz, Al-Hīra, and in the lands of the Ghassānids, did music play an important part in the social life of the people, but even among the badawī Arabs of the interior. (I)

In South Arabia, the most ancient of the Arab civilisations, music and poetry flourished, and although none of the authors of the Mu'allaqāt came from this part (unless we can include Labīd), many of those in the Mufaddaliyyāt and the Hamāsa were of southern blood. We read of a tubba' ruler named Ibn Alīshra who was surnamed Dhū Jadan ("Owner of the Beautiful Voice").<sup>B</sup>

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<sup>B</sup> De Perceval, Hist. Arab., i, 75-6.

<sup>A</sup> In Arabic, the jāhiliyya. The period, according to the Arabs, refers properly to the time between the "Creation of the World" and the birth of Muhammad.



The last tubba' ruler, 'Alī ibn Zaid (d. 525) also bore this laqab, and Al-Isfahānī says that he was the first (? among the princes) to sing in Al-Yaman.<sup>C/</sup> The pre-Islāmic song of Al-Yaman <sup>(is mentioned</sup> ~~is mentioned~~ as late as the 9th century, since Al-Mas'ūdī quotes Ibn Khurdādhbih to the effect that the people of Al-Yaman practised two kinds of music, - the himyarī and the hanafī,<sup>M/</sup> the former evidently being the music of the Himyarites and the latter that of more recent adoption. Several musical instruments used in Islāmic times were of South Arabian provenance, and among them the mi'zaf (a kind of tunbūr), and the kūs (a large kettledrum).

Al-Hijāz, a land of some commercial importance in these days, enables us to discern to some better advantage what counted for musical culture. The fair at 'Ukāz, and the ka'ba at Mecca, had long made Al-Hijāz a sort of national rendezvous, which neither the ancient renown of Al-Yaman, nor the brilliant culture of Al-Hīra and Ghassān, could ever hope to rival. Al-Hijāz was the centre of the indigenous arts. At 'Ukāz the poets and minstrels from all parts of Arabia vied with each other for supremacy in their art. It was here that the famous Mu'allagāt were recited or sung.<sup>S/</sup> Singing-girls (qaināt) were famous in these days,<sup>G/</sup> and legend takes them back to the time of the Banū 'Amālīq.<sup>D/</sup> Musicians from Al-Hijāz found favour at the Ghassānid court.<sup>E/</sup> Among the musical instruments in use we read of the mizhar (lute) the mi'zafa (?psaltery), the qassāba (flute), the mizmār (reed-pipe), and the duff (tambourine).

<sup>C/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, iv, 37.

<sup>M/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 93.

<sup>S/</sup> Brockelmann, Arab. Lit., 403. Entire gasīdas are still sung by the badawī Arabs. Burckhardt, Bedouins and Wānābys, i, 75, 253.

<sup>G/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 2.

<sup>D/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, iii, 157.

<sup>E/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 15.



Another important culture centre for the Arabs was Al-Hīra. Under the Lakhmids, this had become one of the celebrated cities of the East. It was to this capital of the Arabian lands in Mesopotamia, that Bahrām Ghūr (430-38) the Persian monarch was sent, as a prince, to be educated. Here, we are told that he was taught music among other Arab accomplishments.<sup>Z/</sup> When he ascended the throne, one of his first edicts was to improve the status of the musicians at the Persian court.<sup>H/</sup> Al-Nu'mān III (ca. 580-602) was the last <sup>K</sup>Lakhmid king of Al-Hīra, and Al-Ṭabarī tells us that among his shortcomings was a "passion for music".

The influence of Al-Hīra on the culture of Arabia generally was considerable. It was the literary centre from whence poetry radiated to all parts.<sup>C/</sup> It was at the Lakhmid court that the poets Al-Nābigha, Tarafa, 'Amr ibn Kulthūm, and 'Adī ibn Zaid were treated with princely munificence. Seeing how closely music was allied to poetry, it may safely be conjectured that music was equally favoured. It was from Al-Hīra that Al-Hijāz borrowed a more artistic song than the nash hitherto used, <sup>and</sup> also the wooden-bellied ūd (lute) in the place of the skin-bellied mizhar.<sup>O/</sup>

Syria, at the time that we are speaking of, was also populated by a considerable Arabian element. The Arab Nabataeans of North-west Arabia had extended their influence <sup>on</sup> as far north as Palmyra (Tadmor), including Damascus and Beṣrā. When Trajan broke up the Nabataean kingdom at

<sup>Z/</sup> Al-Ṭabarī, i, 185. Mīrkhwānd, i (ii), 356.

<sup>H/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, iii, 157.

<sup>C/</sup> Huart, Arab. Lit., 12. Nicholson, op. cit., 37.

<sup>O/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 94.



Petra in 107 A.D., the political & commercial leadership of the Nabataean communities passed to Palmyra. This remained an important culture centre until the débâcle of 292, when its inhabitants were put to the sword. Of the specific culture of the Nabataeans we have a reliable index in the art remains of Petra, Bosrā, and Palmyra. Whilst we see the impress of Greece and Rome in Nabataean art, there is the clearest evidence that the older Semitic ideals still pervaded the social and religious life. We know little of the musical culture of the Nabataeans. Strabo tells us that they employed musicians at their entertainments.<sup>M/</sup> At Palmyra we read of the kinorā (= Heb. kinnōr), which may have been a kind of barbiton.<sup>X/</sup>

After the fall of Palmyra, the territory hitherto controlled by the Nabataeans, ~~which~~ came under the jurisdiction of the Ghassānids, who became the phylarchs of the Byzantine Emperors for the old Provincia Arabia as well as Syria. With the Ghassānids, the influence of Byzantium was probably considerable, and on that account their culture is said to have been the most advanced among the Arab kingdoms of the Days of Idolatry.<sup>W/</sup> Both Al-Nābigha and Ḥassān ibn Thābit have given glowing accounts of the Ghassānid courts, where not only Arab musicians from Mecca and elsewhere were favoured, but singing-girls from Al-Ḥīra and Byzantium.<sup>Z/</sup> We are told that they played upon the barbat, which was either a lute or a barbiton. On the plains of Upper

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<sup>M/</sup> Strabo, xvi, iv, 27.

<sup>X/</sup> Z.D.M.G., xviii, 105. See also the Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum, ii, No. 268, and the Mission Archéologique en Arabie, by Jaussen and Savignac, p. 217.

<sup>W/</sup> Ency. of Islām, i, 142.

<sup>Z/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 15.



Mesopotamia, were the Jarmaqs (Jamāmiqa), who are said to have used a stringed instrument known as the غیرواره (?) the playing of which was similar to that of the tunbur.<sup>A</sup>

Even among the badawī Arabs of the interior we find that music was appreciated, as we shall see. We read not only of the professional singing-girls, but of the matrons of the tribes playing and singing. Musical instruments are frequently mentioned among them, <sup>such as</sup> ~~the~~ mizhar and kirān (lutes), the muwattar (lit. an instrument of strings), the mizmār (reed-pipe), the duff (tambourine), the jalājil (bells), and the nagūs (clapper).

(2)

In these various Arab kingdoms and communities we can locate three definite culture forces, the Semitic, the Persian, and the Graeco-Byzantine. Firstly in Al-Yaman and Al-Hijāz, whose geographical position protected them from much alien influence, the general culture was almost wholly Arabian, although in Al-Hijāz, Jewish <sup>cultural stimulus</sup> customs were felt, due to the considerable ~~number~~ of a fairly large Jewish community. On the other hand, the constant intercourse of the settled Arab communities with the badawī Arabs of the interior who have always preserved their primitive Semitic customs most rigidly, as Ibn Khaldūn points out,<sup>S</sup> tended to conserve the purely Arabian traits. Secondly,— Al-Hīra was the gateway

<sup>A</sup>. Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 91. Barbier de Meynard thinks that

<sup>S</sup>. Ibn Khaldūn, ii, 271. [ the word kinnāra is intended.



of Perso-Aramaean culture. How much of this ~~was~~ Persian culture was Aryan is doubtful. In the arts especially, Persia was deeply indebted to Babylonia-Assyria. Further, Al-Hīra and Mesopotamia generally, were the habitations of large communities of Aramaeans and Jews, who were strongly imbued with Semitic ideals. Thirdly, Ghassān was the port of Graeco-Byzantine culture. Here also, whilst we can plainly discern this influence, yet the ~~impress~~ impress of the older Semitic culture cannot be ignored. On the whole perhaps, the musical culture of the Arabs of the Days of Idolatry must have been predominantly Semitic.

With the Arabs, whose strong point is genealogy, music is traced to an ancient origin. Jubal the son of Cain is credited with the first song, which was an elegy on the death of Abel.<sup>I/</sup> Bar Hebraeus, the Syrian, tells us that the inventors of musical instruments (ālāt al-mūsīqī) were the daughters of Cain (Qain) hence the name gaina for a singing-girl.<sup>B/</sup> It will be recalled that the Hebrews make Jubal the son of Lamech, "the father of all such as handle the kinnōr (? lyre) and ʿugāb (? reed-pipe)".<sup>C/</sup> The latter, as Lamak, also has a place in the musical traditions of the Arabs as the inventor of the ʿūd (lute). His son Tūbal is credited with the ṭabl (drum) and the duff (tambourine), whilst his daughter Bilāl is claimed to have introduced the maʿāzif.<sup>3/</sup> From the same Arabic source we learn that

<sup>I/</sup> Al-Masʿūdī, i, 65. Mīrkhwānd, i (i), 53. Al-Ṭabarī, i, 146. Al-Jundī, Risāla raud al-masarrāt

<sup>B/</sup> Bar Hebraeus, ~~Bar Hebraeus~~ 8-9.

<sup>C/</sup> Genesis, iv, 21.

<sup>3/</sup> The maʿāzif were instruments whose strings gave the open notes, like the harp, psaltery, or barbiton.



the tunbūr (pandore) came from the people of Sodom (lūt),<sup>E/</sup> although others say the Sap/aeans (Sābi'a),<sup>E/</sup> whilst the Greeks insist that the Arabs themselves invented it.<sup>C/</sup> The Kurds are said to have introduced a wood-wind instrument which appears to have been the saffāra,<sup>M/</sup> whilst the Persians have the nāy (vertical flute), the diyānī or dūnāy (double reed-pipe), the surnāy or more properly the sūrñāy (reed-pipe), and the sinj (cymbal) placed to their credit. All of these instruments were known to the Babylonian-Assyrians and are depicted on the monuments,<sup>S/</sup> whilst many of those of the period under discussion may be found in Persian art remains.<sup>W/</sup>

With the Arabs, as with all the Semites, music played an important part in the mysteries of the soothsayer, enchanter, and prophet. The jinn (genii) were evidently conjured by means of music, and the later notion that the jinn prompted the verses of the poet and the melodies of the musician, was a survival of this belief.<sup>(S)</sup> The Qur'ān hands down some interesting conceptions which relate to music and magic.<sup>A/</sup> The intimate connection between music and magic is borne out by philology. In Arabic, the voice of the jinn is termed the 'azf', which is also the name for a certain stringed instrument.<sup>W/</sup>

When the Jews likened "God's Holy Spirit" to the sounds of the kithara, as we find in the Odes of Solomon, the (vertical flute)

- M/ Ibn Gnaibī (d.1435) said that it was the nāy safīd
- S/ Maspero, Histoire ancienne, ii, 624, 635, 850.
- Rawlinson, Five Great Monarchies, i, 533-7. (405,)
- Perrot, Histoire de l'Art, ii, 201, 454, ~~iii~~, iii, (587-8, 600, 451. iv, 568. (309-79))
- W/ Bands of the time of Shāpur II are depicted in the sculptures at Takht-i Būstān. See Flandrin, pl. x, & xii. Cf. also the Sāsānid silver dish in O.M. Dalton's Treasures of the Oxus, 190.
- (S) The musicians in the days of Islām, such as the Ibrānīm al-Maṣṣilī, his son Ishāq, and Ziryāb, all claimed to be taught melodies by the jinn.
- A/ Suras, xxi, 79. xxxiv, 10. xxxviii, 17-18. Kasf al-mahjūt, 402-3. Al-Tabarī (Zotenberg edit.), i, 426.

G. Julius Pollux, iv, 9, 60.  
 E. Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 89-91.  
 E. Huth MS.

G. E. E.







Yet in spite of idols and temples, the Arabs of the jāhiliyya interested themselves but little in religion of any sort. <sup>B/</sup> The badawī view of life, which was thoroughly secular, and quite hedonistic, dominated even the cities and towns. To the badawī Arab, - "Love, wine, gambling, hunting, the pleasures of song and romance, the brief, pointed, and elegant expression of wit and wisdom" - alone came to be the things that mattered. "These things he knew to be good. Beyond them he only saw the grave". <sup>A/</sup> We see these thoughts expressed in a poem by Sulmī ibn Rabī'a, who lived in the century before Islām. It is given in the Hamāsa, where the poet tells us how death comes to all and sundry, but meanwhile there are "life's joys", and among them the pleasure of listening to the music of the lute (mizhar).

Everywhere we see the shā'ir or poet-soothsayer in possession of high social prestige, alike at the courts of Al-Hīra and Ghassān, the fair at 'Ukāz, <sup>and</sup> the badawī encampment. <sup>X/</sup> The hijā or satire (originally an incantation) was highly venerated. It was delivered in rhymed prose called saj' or else in unrhymed poetry known as rajaz. The shā'ir was doubtless often as much a musician as a poet, although it would seem that he sometimes engaged a musician ~~unwillingly~~ (mughann, mughannī) to chant his verse, in the same way

<sup>B/</sup> Lyall, Anc. Arab. Poet., xxvii. Nicholson, op. cit., 135.

<sup>A/</sup> Nicholson, 136.

<sup>X/</sup> That a number of kings and chiefs during the jāhiliyya were poets and musicians is significant.



as he would employ a reciter (rāwī) to recite it. This idea persisted even unto the days of Islām, when we find a poet like A'snā Hamdān and a musician like Ahmad al-Nasībī in this kind of partnership. ~~X~~.

How highly the poet was esteemed we know from the Muzhir of <sup>al-</sup>Suyūtī, - ~~W~~.

"When there appeared a poet in a family of the Arabs, the other tribes round about would gather together to that family and wish them joy in their good luck. Feasts would be got ready, the women of the tribes would join together in bands, playing upon their lutes (mazāhir, sing. mizhar), as they were wont to do at bridals, ..... for a poet was a defence to the honour of them all, a weapon to ward off insult from their good name, and a means of perpetuating their glorious deeds and of establishing their fame for ever".

There was also the female musician (mughanniya) who played no inconsiderable part in the literary and musical life. The harīm was unknown, and women appear to have ~~was~~ enjoyed almost as much liberty as men. ~~A~~. It was the women of the tribes who joined in the music of the family or tribal festivities with their musical instruments, a custom which continued down to the time of Muḥammad, whose own nuptials with Khadīja were in

the music of his two famous singing-girls known as the

~~X~~. Al-Iṣṣanānī, v, 162.

~~W~~. al-Suyūtī, Al-Muzhir, ii, 236. The translation is from Lyall's Ancient Arabian Poetry, xvii, See Sale, 20.

~~A~~. Lyall, op.cit., xxxi.

~~X~~. Al-Iṣṣanānī, ii, 215. Al-Iṣṣanānī, ii, 215.

~~X~~. Al-Iṣṣanānī, ii, 236-7. and Al-Iṣṣanānī, ii, 236-7.

~~X~~. Al-Iṣṣanānī, ii, 236-7.

~~X~~. Al-Iṣṣanānī, ii, 236-7.

~~X~~. Al-Iṣṣanānī, ii, 236-7.



"celebrated with great festivity, mirth, music, and dancing". ~~Uthman ibn al-Affan~~<sup>at</sup> Uhud (625), the journey ~~was~~ enlivened by the women of the Quraish, led by Hind bint 'Uthra, singing war songs and laments for the slain at Badr, and playing their tambourines (dufuf).<sup>C/</sup> At the onset of battle, they were in the van, still singing and playing.<sup>D/</sup> What the women generally excelled in was the marthiya or lament, and the na'uh or elegy.<sup>X/</sup>

~~Uthman~~ Side by side with these matrons we find a class known as the gainat ~~Uthman~~ (sing. gaina). These were the singing-girls, who were invariably found in the household of every Arab chief and well-to-do citizen. Singing-girls appear in the old story of the destruction of the people of 'Ad, as told by Al-Mas'udi<sup>I/</sup> and Al-Tabari.<sup>2/</sup> The people of 'Ad appear to have belonged to South Arabia.<sup>E/</sup> A long period of drought afflicted the land, and this led them to send suppliants to the temple at Mecca who were to beseech divine aid for rain. At Mecca, the deputation was received by the amir of the Banu 'Amaliq, Mu'awiya ibn Bakr, who entertained them suitably, especially with the music of his two famous singing-girls known as the jaradatān ("Two Grasshoppers"). These pleasantries

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C/ De Perceval, Hist. Arab., iii, 91  
D/ Ibid., iii, 99.  
X/ ~~Uthman~~ Al-Mufaddaliyyāt, ii, 215. Al-Iṣṣfanānī, xix, 87.  
I/ Al-Mas'udi, iii, 296-7, and ~~Uthman~~ Lebré de Merveilles, 134.  
2/ Al-Tabari, i, 231.  
E/ Ency. of Islām, i, 121.



continued for a month, and meanwhile the suppliants were neglecting their mission. Finally, prayers were begun, but the deity was so wroth with the people of 'Ad ~~was~~ on account of their sins, that he sent a cloud over the land which burst and destroyed the whole race.<sup>O/</sup> The singing-girl is sometimes called a karīna,<sup>F/</sup> and even dājīna or mudjina (inf. dajin = "be cloudy").<sup>G/</sup> It was the custom for these girls to play and sing on a cloudy day, and this, together with their nickname, is surely bound up with the 'Ad legend.

At the period just prior to Islām, 'Abdallāh ibn Jud'am, a Quraish chief, possessed two singing-girls called the jarādatān of 'Ad, and while he had them they were such an attraction at Mecca that he was compelled to keep an open house. He then presented them to his friend Umayya ibn Abī'l-Ṣalt (d. 630) the Pagan poet of Mecca.<sup>A/</sup> ~~the 'Ad praised.~~ <sup>X/</sup> ~~One of the singing-girls~~

How much the singing-girls had become an integral part of social life may be seen in the early struggles of Muḥammad himself. When the Meccans were marching to Badr in 622, they "took with them all the instruments and appurtenances of pleasure, and singing-girls; the latter performing on musical instruments, singing near every water, where a halt was made, and lengthening their tongues with reproaches against the professors of Islām".<sup>X/</sup>

<sup>O/</sup> The jarādatān passed into proverb. See Freytag, Arabum Proverbia, iii, 49. xxiii, 517.

<sup>F/</sup> Al-Tibrīzī, 83. Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 419. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī, iii, 186.

<sup>G/</sup> Al-Mufaddal/īyyāt, lxxii, xxiv. Cf. Lyall's note.

<sup>A/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 2.

<sup>X/</sup> Mīrkhwān, ii (i), 291.



When Muhammad was known to be approaching, the Meccan chief was counselled to retire rather than risk a battle, but he replied, - "No, I will not return to Mecca until we have refreshed ourselves at Badr, and spent three days in feasting and listening to the singing and playing of the singing-girls".<sup>B/</sup>

At the court of the Ghassānid monarch Jabala ibn al-Ayham (ca. 628-37), ten or more of these singing-girls were in evidence.<sup>C/</sup> Hassān ibn Thābit (ca. 563-683) says, -<sup>D/</sup>

"I saw ten singing-girls, five of them Byzantines singing the songs of their country to the accompaniment of the barbat (lute or barbiton), and five others from Al-Hīra who had been given to King Jabala by Iyās ibn Qabīsa, singing the songs of their country. Arab singers also came from Mecca and elsewhere for his (Jabala's) pleasure".

At Al-Hīra,<sup>S/</sup> and at the Persian court,<sup>M/</sup> we see these singing-girls, and even with the badawī Arabs. It was the antiphonal chanting of the singing-girls (dājināt) that Bishr ibn 'Amr praised.<sup>A/</sup> One of the singing-girls of this same poet, named Huraira, led the famous poet-minstrel Al-A'snā Maimūn ibn Qais to declare his love.<sup>I/</sup> The valiant poet-shaikh of the Banū'l-Hārith, - 'Abd Yaghūth ibn Waqqas (d. ca. 612) could not forget the delights of the singing-girls even in his death-song.<sup>2/</sup>

Singing-girls were also attached to the taverns for the entertainment of visitors. Al-A'snā Maimūn ibn Qais sings of the bitter-sweet joys of the tavern, not merely

<sup>B/</sup> Al-Tabarī, i, 1307.

<sup>C/</sup> Dr. Nicholson points out that this reference really belongs to an earlier period.

<sup>D/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 15.

<sup>S/</sup> Al-Mufaddaliyyat, xxx.

<sup>A/</sup> Al-Mufaddaliyyat, lxxi.

<sup>M/</sup> Al-Mufaddaliyyat, lxxii, xxvi

<sup>I/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 79.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Mufaddaliyyat, xxx.



<sup>58</sup> the "flowing bowl", but <sup>58</sup> the alluring harp (sanj) and the refrain (tarjī) of the singing-girl. <sup>D/</sup> Tarafa, <sup>E/</sup> Labīd, <sup>F/</sup> and 'Abd al-Masīh ibn 'Asala, <sup>G/</sup> all praised the good cheer of the tavern singing-girl in their verse. <sup>H/</sup>

Lyall was of opinion that these singing-girls "were all foreigners, either Persians or Greeks from Syria; they sang however, at any rate sometimes, poems in Arabic, though probably to foreign airs". <sup>2/</sup> Von Kremer goes further and says, - "It is clear beyond doubt that these female singers originally sang in their own tongue - Greek or Persian and not Arabic. .... Tuwais is the first who sang in Arabic with the accompaniment of the hand-drum". <sup>x/</sup> That all the singing-girls were "foreigners" can scarcely be true, unless we are to discredit Al-Isfanānī, and the poets of the jāhiliyya, who most certainly tell us about Arab singing-girls, who sang in their native tongue. <sup>2/</sup> The gaina who sang the verses of Al-Nābigha, and made the poet realize for the first time that his poetry contained faulty rhymes (iqwā') must have spoken Arabic well, and was assuredly an Arab by education at least. <sup>D/</sup> Indeed, one can scarcely imagine that the Arabs would have listened for one moment to Arabic poetry from the mouth of a "foreigner", who would rarely be able to apportion the vocalic & consonantal values which are inseparable from the poetic art, especially when sung. That Tuwais was the first to sing in Arabic, is certainly not the case. What is claimed for him in this respect, is something quite different, as we shall see later.

<sup>D/</sup> Al-Tibrīzī, 146. <sup>E/</sup> Al-Mu'allagāt. <sup>F/</sup> Al-Tibrīzī, 73.

<sup>G/</sup> Al-Mufaddaliyyāt, lxxii. ~~~~~~~~~

<sup>H/</sup> For the character of these singing-girls, see Al-Tirmidhī, ii, 33. Tāj al-'arūs, sub "Zammār".

<sup>2/</sup> Lyall, op. cit., xxvi, 87. <sup>2/</sup> Al-Mufaddaliyyāt, xv.

<sup>X/</sup> See also Clouston, 377.

<sup>D/</sup> Al-Isfanānī, ix, 164. For the importance of correct pronunciation in the song see also v, 57.



"Before Islām" says Perron, "music was little else than unpretentious psalming, <sup>S/</sup> varied and embroidered by the singer, male or female, according to the taste, emotion, or effect desired. These variations, or rather caprices, were prolonged interminably on a syllable, word or ~~word~~ <sup>hemistich</sup>, in such a way that the singing of a cantilena of two or three verses might be prolonged for hours. .... The timbre of the voice, its mobility and vibrations, the feeling which made it sound or quaver, determined the merit of the singer". <sup>A/</sup>

Harmony, as we understand the term in music, was quite unknown. Everyone sang or played in unison or the octave. The only "harmony", if such it could be called, was that supplied by the various instruments of percussion, such as the tabl or duff, and the figuration of the melody by means of ornaments in the shape of trills or turns which were called zawā'id.

Bishr ibn 'Amr tells us about a skilled songstress (dājina) who "sang antiphonally with another like her, .....and struck the resounding lute". <sup>X/</sup> Tarafa, describing a scene "where men tap the wine skins", speaks of the "low note" upon which the song began. Again we are told in a poem by 'Abda ibn al-Tabīb that "the singer prolonged the final vowels with a high trill (tudrī) and clearly enunciated the syllables (tartīl) giving each its due measure and value". <sup>(S)</sup>

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<sup>A/</sup> Perron, Femmes arabes avant l'Islamisme, xxxi.

<sup>S/</sup> Tarannum was the Arabic word for this. Ibn Khaldūn says that the young men of the jāhiliyya passed away their idle hours in this psalming. (ii, 359).

<sup>X/</sup> Al-Mufaddaliyyāt, lxxi.

<sup>(S)</sup> Ibid., xxvi, p.101.



16

Arab historians like to expatiate upon the origin of the ~~nah~~ song. The first song was the ḥudā', or caravan song, and it is traced to Mudār ibn Nizār ibn Ma'ad<sup>d A</sup>, who is the Almodad of the Old Testament.<sup>M</sup> It was in the rajaz metre, a measure said to correspond with the lifting and lowering of the camel's feet.<sup>B</sup> From the ḥudā' there issued the nash, which is expressly stated to be no more than an improved ḥudā'. With the folk, the ḥudā', sometimes called the rakbānī, was the "muse populaire".<sup>E</sup> Being in the simple rajaz metre it was pre-eminently suitable for the extemporaneous song (ghinā' murtajal) which we frequently read of among the earlier untutored musicians., who used a wand (qadīb) in the place of a musical instrument to mark the measure of the song. Al-Asma'ī objected to this type of music, probably because it savoured of Pagan days.

In Al-Hijāz, which was not so advanced musically as Al-Hīra and Ghassān perhaps, the nash (~~nah~~<sup>with</sup> the naḥn) was the only type of song practised until the ~~6th century~~ 6th century, when the poet-minstrel Al-Nadr ibn al-Hārith, went on a deputation to the Arab court at Al-Hīra, and returned with several musical innovations, and among them an improved style of song to the nash, and the wooden-bellied 'ūd, which took the place of the skin-bellied mizhar. Rhythm (īqā') such

<sup>M</sup>. I Chronicles, i, 20.

<sup>A</sup>. Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 92. Ibn Khaldūn, ii, 359. The story runs that Mudār fell from his camel, fracturing his hand, and in his pain he cried out, - "Yā yadāh, Yā yadāh" (O my hand, O my hand), which gave birth to the rajaz metre.

<sup>B</sup>. It is not improbable that the ḥudā' had a magical import at first, either to charm the camel to hasten its pace, or else as a charm against the jinn or spirit-world, that the nomad feared in the desert. At any rate, it appears to have had a magical import among the Hebrews, who knew it as the hidah.

Numbers, xii, 8. Psalms, xlix, 4. lxxviii, 1. Hab., ii, 6.

<sup>E</sup>. Ency. of Islām, i, 466.



as we read of in the sinād and hazaj types of song in the 7th century, appears not to have been practised in these days, <sup>A/</sup> for although we are told that the nudā' (and the and the nash by inference) was made up of "measured melodies", (al-nān mauzūna), <sup>X/</sup> the <sup>musical</sup> ~~measure~~ was evidently determined by the prosodical feet of the verse, and was not independent as in the later rhythm (īqā').

In Al-Yaman ~~there were two~~ there were two kinds of song practised, the himyarī and the hanafī, the latter being considered the better music. <sup>M/</sup> Here we are <sup>clearly</sup> introduced to a pre-Islamic type in the himyarī, i.e. the music of the Himyarites, and a more recent class of music, - the hanafī. There is a passage in the Qur'ān (liii, 61) which is claimed to refer to pre-Islamic music. The verse runs, - "Ye laugh and do not weep and ye are sāmidūn". <sup>Abū'l-'Abbās 'Abdallāh ibn al-'Abbās ibn al-Muttalib (d.688) said that the sāmidūn were those who indulged in the singing of the Himyarites.</sup> <sup>Z/</sup>

A. Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, iii, 186.

X. Al-Ghazālī, 217.

M. Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 93.

Z. Al-Ghazālī, 217.



In the Days of Idolatry we do not find mention of "modes" such as were used by the Persians and Byzantines. Yet "modes" evidently existed with the ancient Semites of Babylonia-Assyria and of Syria, ~~Sum~~ and there is no reason why the Arabs should not have followed a principle common to the ancient world. In an anonymous MS, ~~the original of~~ which may possibly have been written in the 11th century, there is an interesting passage, which throws considerable light on the question at issue. It runs,-

"And Hasan al-Nasibī, he mixed with all the best tale-tellers and he knew the lives of the musicians. He said that the singers in the Days of Idolatry were many, and that they knew the ancient songs and stories, (and) knew the 'Stops'."

What were the 'Stops'? Could they have been modal devices similar to the dastānāt of the Persians? ~~A~~ There appear/ to be substantial reasons for this view, since elsewhere the author of this MS says,- "Sometimes they call the 'Fingers' (asābi') by Arabian and Persian names", and that "they had other music called 'Stops' which came out of the 'Fingers'". ~~B~~

From this authority we learn that in the time of Yūnis al-Kātib there were ten notes, but that "the people of the country use other notes like the people of old". Further we are told, that "the pandore (tunbūr) came from the Sabaeans who measured the earth, and so it was called the Measured Tunbūr". We are ~~also~~ ~~informed~~ informed that it

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~~A~~ Dastānāt = dasātīn. Al-Khwārizmī (Mafātīh al-ʿulūm, 238) says,- "The dastān (sing.) is also a name for every melodic mode (lahn) of the melodic modes which are referred to garbud".

~~B~~ Huth MS.



was made of a gourd by the peasantry, who played "the songs of (the Days of) Idolatry" upon it. This account substantiates the statement of Al-Khwārizmī who mentions a tunbūr al-mizānī (measures tunbūr) which was also called the tunbūr al-baghdādī.<sup>A</sup> This latter is distinctly mentioned by Al-Fārābī on account of its "pre-Islāmic scale", which was arrived at by dividing a string into forty parts.<sup>B</sup>

The pandore was certainly one of the stringed instruments of the Days of Idolatry. The lute was also in the hands of the Arabs at this period. At first it <sup>was</sup>~~it~~ known as the mizhar, kirān, and barbat.<sup>E</sup> although we cannot be sure that these words were used for one and the same instrument. The mizhar was probably the old skin-bellied lute which was in use before the wooden-bellied ūd was introduced. The kirān may have been <sup>a</sup>~~was~~ name derived through Syro-Hebraic contacts, being a metathesis of kinār or kinnār (= Heb. kinnōr).<sup>F</sup> The term barbat was Persian (= Gr. βάρβιτον), and whilst it stood for ~~was~~ lute in Persia and lower Mesopotamian lands, in Syria and Upper Mesopotamia it may have been a barbiton.

The flat-chested, quadrangulat guitar was called the murabba'. According to the frescoes at the frescoes at the Qusair 'Amra/ palace, the instrument was still a favourite in the Umayyad days. The rabāb or rebec was also known to the Arabs of the jāhiliyya ~~was~~ although we have no mention of the bow. We are told

A. Al-Khwārizmī, 237.

B. Land, Recherches, 145.

E. Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, iii, 186.

F. Cf. Forbes, Dict. of the Hindustani Language, sub karān.



that "Al-Khalīl (ibn Aḥmad) says that the ancient Arabs sang their poems to its voice". <sup>(A)</sup> We also read of the muwattar (lit. "a stringed instrument"), <sup>(B)</sup> and of the mi'zafa (? a <sup>is altered</sup> ~~musical~~), <sup>(C)</sup> as well as the sanj, <sup>(D)</sup> (harp).

The term mizmar stood for any wood-wind instrument, whether a flute or a reed-pipe, although it more especially had reference to the latter. ~~musical~~ Zamr was also a term for the reed-pipe, whilst the qassāba was a flute. The mizmar and the duff (tambourine) made the martial music of the Jewish tribes in Al-Hijāz, whilst ~~even~~ the duff alone frequently sufficed. Clement of Alexandria tells us that the cymbals (sunnūj) were used by the Arabs in battle.

During the Days of Ignorance as today, <sup>(C)</sup> music was to be found in private life, the public life, and the religious life of the Arabs. Just as they toiled for their Assyrian task-masters in ancient times to the accompaniment of the song, <sup>(I)</sup> so the Arabs of Al-Medīna sang as they dug the fosse around the city when the Meccans threatened them. <sup>(D)</sup> Just as the Israelites sang the well-song, <sup>(S)</sup> so did the 5th century Arabs. <sup>(4)</sup> Just as the ancients entered battle to music, <sup>(X)</sup> so did the Arabs of the jāhiliyya. <sup>(I)</sup> Just as Sargon sang of the exploits of his Assyrian warriors, ~~so~~ so did the 4th century Arabs recount their victory over the Romans in song. <sup>(F)</sup> Just as the temples <sup>possibly</sup> of Ishtar and Yahweh resounded with music and hymns, so ~~did~~ the temples <sup>of shrines</sup> of the Arabs. <sup>(A)</sup> ~~musical~~ When the Hebrews

<sup>(C)</sup> Parisot, Mus. orient., 5. <sup>(I)</sup> Schraeder, ii, 234.

<sup>(D)</sup> Ibn Sa'd, ii (I), 50. 4. According to St. Nilus.

<sup>(F)</sup> Exekiel, xxxiii, 3. <sup>(I)</sup> <sup>al-</sup> Ḥamāsa, 254.

<sup>(F)</sup> Sozomen, Hist. Eccles., vi, 38.

<sup>(A)</sup> ~~musical~~ Ḥamāsa, 50. Nicholson, 73.

<sup>(A)</sup> Huth MS. <sup>(B)</sup> Al-Tibrīzī (Labīd).

<sup>(C)</sup> Al-Ṭabarī, i, 1307.

<sup>(D)</sup> Al-Tibrīzī, 146.







(3)

Of the names of musicians of the Days of Idolatry, we have but few. We are told however that "the singers in the Days of Idolatry were many",<sup>A/</sup> and one of the writers mentioned in the Fihrist wrote a Kitāb al-aghani' alā huruf which mentioned the names of the male and female singers in the Days of Idolatry and in the Days of Islām".<sup>M/</sup> If we are to accept the opinion of Brockelmann that ~~the~~ poems <sup>of the jāhiliyya</sup> were meant to be chanted to a simple musical accompaniment, it is highly probable that many of the poets were singers, and, perhaps, to be gifted with a good voice would soon mark out one poet from another. It may be that the famous poet of the Banū Taghlib, 'Adī ibn Rabi'a<sup>(d. ca. 495)</sup> was called Muhalhil on this account, as De Perceval suggested,<sup>S/</sup> although the name is said to have originated in another way.<sup>Z/</sup> Al-A'shā Maimūn ibn Qais (d. ca. 629) who was called the sannāja al-'Arab, was so named, according to some, because he played the sanj or harp.<sup>N/</sup>

Al-Nadr ibn al-Hārith (d. 624), a descendant of the famous Qusayy and a cousin of Muḥammad, was certainly one of the minstrel-poets of the jāhiliyya. He became one of the Prophet's rivals in a professional as well as a political sense,<sup>B/</sup> since they both desired the ear of the public, the one with "song and story", and the other with "revelations". It was Al-Nadr whom ~~the~~ the Prophet pilloried in the Qur'ān (xxxi, 5-6). At the Arab court of Al-Hīra he had learned to play the lute ('ūd) & the more artistic music of this city, which he

A/ Huth MS. M/ Al-Fihrist, 145.

S/ De Perceval, Hist. Arab., ii, 280.

Z/ Huart, Arab. Lit., 12. Margoliouth, J.R.A.S., 1925, p. 422.

N/ Nicholson, Lit. Hist. Arabs., 123. Al-Isfahānī (Sāsī Edit.)

B/ Huart, op. cit., 32. 1, 146.



introduced into Mecca. <sup>C/</sup> Taken prisoner by Muḥammad at the battle of Badr, he was decapitated. ~~E/~~

Only one other musician male in these days can we discover, and that is Malik ibn Jubair al-Mughannī, who was one of a deputation from the Banū Tai to Muḥammad in the year 630. <sup>E/</sup>

Among songstresses, many names have been preserved. The legendary period supplies four at least. The jarādātān of the Banū 'Ād were named Qu'ād and Thamād. <sup>B/</sup> These are nicknames and mean respectively, - "lameness of hips" and "the water preserver in needy times". Hazīla and 'Afīra were two singing-girls of the Banū Jadīs the tribe, which, legend says, destroyed the Banū Tasm. <sup>C/</sup> Tai

The mother of the famous poet Ḥatīm ~~was~~ <sup>D/</sup> was probably a musician, and ~~she was the mother of~~ Al-Khansā the exquisite elegaist sang her laments (marāthī) to music. <sup>E/</sup> Hind bint 'Utba, was a representative matron of the Arabs of the jāhiliyya, and she was both a poet and musician. Bint 'Afzar <sup>X/</sup> was a songstress who kept, or was employed at, a house of entertainment where the famous Al-Ḥārith ibn Zālim and Khālīd ibn Ja'far met. <sup>F/</sup>

Muraira and Khulaida were two singing-girls of Bishr ibn 'Amr, a grandee of Al-Ḥira in the days of Al-Mu'mān III (ca. 602). <sup>G/</sup> It was in praise of the first of these that Al-A'shā sang.

<sup>C/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 93-4.

<sup>D/</sup> Al-Isfahānī,

<sup>E/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 48. xxi, 191. He is called Malik ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Khaibarī by Al-Tabarī. See also Ḥajjāz ibn 'Auf al-Azdī in Al-Isfahānī.

<sup>B/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, iii, 296. Ibn Badrūn, 53. Al-Isfahānī, x, 48.

<sup>C/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, iii, 29. Ibn Badrūn, 65.

<sup>E/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xiii, 140. <sup>F/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, x, 18.

<sup>X/</sup> A wife of Ḥatīm <sup>Tai</sup> ~~was~~ was named Mawia bint 'Afzar.

<sup>G/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 79.



## CHAPTER II.

### ISLAM and MUSIC.

"To listen to music is to transgress the law: To make music is to transgress religion: To take pleasure in music is to transgress the faith; and renders you an infidel".

D'Ohsson, Tableau générale, ii, 188.

.....

About the year 571, a child was born at Mecca the chief city of Al-Hijāz, who was destined to change the entire fortunes of Arabia and the Arabs. This was Muhammad, "The Prophet of Allāh". He belonged to the famous tribe of the Quraish which had been masters of Mecca since the 5th century, and was a grandson of one of its shaikhs. When nearly forty years of age (610), Muhammad began to receive his "Revelations", which later became the foundation of the Qur'an.

The Quraish however, would have none of these "Revelations", and vigorously opposed Muhammad. At first they thought him a shā'ir (poet-soothsayer) or a kāhin (magician), for, indeed, the Qur'an itself shows the style of the saj' or rhymed prose, such as the shā'ir used. He was actually called a shā'ir majnūn, i.e. a poet-soothsayer possessed of the genii, and looked upon as an ordinary augur. <sup>A</sup> The Prophet repudiated the title of soothsayer in sūras lxlx, although one cannot read sūras cxiii and cxiv without feeling that they are no more than what could be expected from a kāhin, ~~while~~ whilst sūra cxi is a typical hijā or curse of a soothsayer. <sup>I</sup>

<sup>I</sup> Two of these sūras are "charms" against bewitchery and the genii (jinn), and to this very day they are engraved on amulets for this purpose. There is little difference between these sūras and the charms or denunciations of the Babylonian-Assyrian ashshapu.

<sup>A</sup> Hirschfeld, 10.



In the course of time, Muhammad's teachings bore fruit, and although his disciples were few, they included some of the most influential men of the Quraish. Indeed, his ~~influence~~ influence at Mecca became so great, that the Umayya branch of the tribe proscribed him, and later (622) he was compelled to seek refuge in the city of Yathrib. This was the "Year of the Hijra (migration)", and Muhammad gave the name of Al-Medina to this city of refuge, and its two tribes ~~who~~ formed the bulk of the population, were named the Anṣār or "Helpers". ~~With~~ With the armed force of Al-Medina at his back, Muhammad unsheathed the sword of Islām against the unbelievers.

Muhammad died in 632, but he had witnessed the triumph of Islām in Arabia, even as far afield as Al-Bahrain. Al-Hijāz was now the centre of attraction for all Arabia. The ancient renown of Al-Yaman, the culture of Al-ʿIrāq, the puissance of Ghassān, counted for naught in the face of the new spirit cradled in Al-Hijāz, which, within a century, was to hold the minds of all the peoples from the confines of China & the banks of the Indus, to the shores of Morocco & the Pyrennees.

(I)

One of the most perplexing points in Islām, is its attitude towards music, and for centuries its legists have argued the question whether listening to music (al-samāʿ) is lawful or not. It is not easy to comprehend how the question arose, seeing that there is not a word of censure against music in the Qurʾān, and above all, in face of the fact that music was almost an indispensable item in the social life of the Arabs.

Says, "The first book the company of a singer sang" (Sūrah, ix, 4.).

B: This is the view of Al-Zuhri. Cf. Sūrah, ix, 4.

C: Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, iii, 17. Al-Zuhri, op.

X: Al-Zuhri, op.



Where then, did the "authority" come from for this opposition to music? The censure of "wine, woman, and song", was certainly nothing new to Semitic peoples, for the Hebrews, and perhaps the Phoenicians also, had their puritans who cried out against these things.<sup>A</sup> Something of this spirit pervaded even Pagan Arabia, and the heathen poet Umayya ibn Abī'l-Salt was quite a puritan in some respects, although he never breathed a word against music.

Orientalists are divided on the question of the origin of the Islāmic censure of listening to music. One group attributes it directly to Muḥammad himself, whilst the other holds that it was manufactured by the theologians of the 'Abbāsīd era who were jealous of the inordinate attention paid to music and musicians. At first sight it would appear to be an easy matter to settle this question by appeal to the Qur'ān and the hadīth, but the former is interpreted according to the particular point of view of the exegete, whilst the latter has definite statements which support both sides equally.

It is claimed by Muslim exegetes that the verse (sūra xxxv, i) which says, - "He increases in His creatures that which He wills", refers to the "Beautiful Voice".<sup>B</sup> Again they say, that where the text says (sūra xxxi, 18), - "Verily, the worse liked of voices is the voice of the ass", we have a negative praise of the "Beautiful Voice".<sup>C</sup> Then it is argued from sūra vii, 30, that singing is allowable since it is laid down, - "Say, who hath forbidden the adornment of Allāh which he hath provided for His creatures".<sup>X</sup> On the other hand, the puritans object

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<sup>A</sup> Isaiah, v, 12. Amos, vi, 5. xxiii, 15, 16. Jesus ben Sirach says, "Use not much the company of a woman that is a singer". (Eccles. ix, 4.).

<sup>B</sup> This is the view of Al-Zuhri. Cf. Al-Baidāwī, ii, 148.

<sup>C</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 177. Al-Ghazālī, 209.

<sup>X</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 214.



that singing is "unlawful" because it employs poetry, and they point to the Prophet's condemnation of poets in sūra xxxi, 5-6, where he says, - "There is one who purchaseth a ludicrous story, that he may seduce men from the way of Allāh, without knowledge, and may laugh/ the same to scorn: these shall suffer a shameful punishment". This anathema was hurled directly at the poet-minstrel Al-Nadr ibn al-Hārith, whose pagan song and story were more readily listened to at first than were the "Revelations" of Muḥammad. Indeed, several of the early Muslims considered that the "ludicrous story" meant "singing",<sup>D</sup> and among them Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Mas'ūd (d.653), Ibrāhīm ibn Yazīd al-Nakha'ī (d.715), and Abū Sa'īd al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d.728). Then again, we see Muḥammad condemning the poet in sūra xxvi, 224-26, saying, - "And the poets do those follow who go astray. Dost thou not see that they wander distraught in every vale?" Yet this too, was probably not directed against poetry as such, but simply against the poet who represented Pagan ideals, and who moreover, was pouring out satires and invective against the Prophet. There can be little doubt that Muḥammad feared the poet, and stopped at nothing to accomplish his discredit, or even his removal if necessary, as we know in the case of Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf and Ka'b ibn Zuhair. All that savoured of the old religion was treated ~~with~~ contumeliously by Muḥammad. Note how scornful he is of whistling and hand-clapping in sūra viii, 35. On the whole however, it was not in the Qur'ān that the contemners of music found any real basis for their strictures, and they were compelled to turn to the only other "authority", the ḥadīth.

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<sup>D</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 244.



Hadīth was the name given to a saying or story of Muḥammad<sup>2</sup> which acquired "the force of law and some of the authority of inspiration",<sup>X/</sup> and it was looked upon as second only to the Qur'an. Which hadīth is to be implicitly accepted, which is only a partial truth, and which is to be totally rejected, is ~~was~~ determined by rules drawn up by Muslim legists which cannot be dealt with here. Suffice it to say, that no hadīth can be accepted that is at variance with the Qur'an. Let us first consider the "traditions" which consider "listening to music" as "unlawful".

ʿĀ'isha the wife of Muḥammad has handed down a tradition that the Prophet once said, - "Verily, Allāh hath made the singing-girl (qaina) unlawful, and the selling of her and her price and teaching her". Al-Ghazālī says that this hadīth only refers to the singing-girl of the taverns.<sup>A/</sup> A tradition of Jābir ibn ʿAbdillāh makes the Prophet say, - "Iblīs (Satan) was the first who wailed and the first who sang". Another from Abū Umāma runs, - "No one lifts up his voice in singing but Allāh sends to him two devils to his two shoulders, beating with their heels on his breast until he refrains".<sup>Z/</sup> Muḥammad is also credited with having said, - "Music and singing cause hypocrisy to grow in the heart as water makes corn grow",<sup>S/</sup> whilst others attribute the origin of this hadīth to Ibn Masʿūd.<sup>B/</sup>

In the Saḥīḥ of Al-Tirmidhī (d.892), the Prophet is said to have cursed both singing and the singer,<sup>C/</sup> although the truth of this hadīth has been questioned.<sup>D/</sup> In another tradition, the singing-girls and stringed instruments (maʿāzif) are given as signs of the end of the world.<sup>E/</sup>

X. Nicholson, Lit. Hist. Arabs, 144

A. Al-Ghazālī, 244-5.

Z. Al-Ghazālī, 246.

S. Mishkāṭ al-masābīḥ, ii, 425.

B. Al-Ghazālī, 248.

C. Al-Tirmidhī, i, 241.

D. Lammens, iii, 233.

E. Al-Tirmidhī, ii, 33.



Musical instruments are declared to be among the most powerful means by which the devil seduces man. An instrument of music is the devil's mu'adhdhin ("caller to prayer") serving to call man to his worship. ~~F.~~ ~~W.~~

The legists even brought the testimony of the "Companions of the Prophet" and other illustrious men of Islām, against listening to music. 'Abdallāh ibn 'Umar is said to have heard a pilgrim ~~was~~ singing and rebuked him saying, - "I do not hear Allāh from you". This same worthy, hearing the playing of a mizmār (reed-pipe) stopped his ears saying, - "Thus I saw the Apostle of Allāh do". ~~M.~~ Singing was as bad as lying, for 'Uthmān said, - "I have not sung, and I have not lied". ~~Q.~~ Other contemners quote the Prophet's rebuke to Shīrīn the singing-girl of Ḥassān ibn Thābit, whom he forbade to sing; and 'Umar's flogging the "Companions" who used to listen to music; and 'Alī's finding fault with Mu'āwiya for keeping singing-girls, and his not allowing Ḥasan to look at the Abyssinian woman who used to sing. ~~X.~~

The traditions in favour of listening to music are however, almost as weighty, although not as numerous, as those against it. There are two which attribute to Muhammad the following sayings, - "Allāh has not sent a Prophet except with a beautiful voice", and, - "Allāh listens more intently to a man with a beautiful voice reading the Qur'ān than does a master ~~was~~ of a singing-girl to her singing". ~~D.~~ It is related of Anas ibn Mālīk (d. 715) that Muhammad "used to make him sing the ḥudā'" (caravan song) when travelling, and that Anjusha used to

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~~F.~~ Lane, Arab. Nights, ii, 289.

~~M.~~ Al-Ghazālī, 248, Ibn Khallikān, iii, 521.

~~Q.~~ Lisān, s.v.

~~X.~~ Kashf al-mahjūh, 411.

~~D.~~ Al-Ghazālī, 209.



sing it for the women and Al-Barā ibn Mālīk (the brother of Anas) for the men".<sup>A/</sup> Al-Ghazālī testifies that the ḥudā' "did not cease to be one of the customs of the Arabs in the time of the Apostle of Allāh, and in the time of the 'Companions', and it is nothing but poems equipped with agreeable sounds (sawāt tayyiba) and measures melodies (alḥan mauzūna)."<sup>Z/</sup>

As for the singing-girls which a previous ḥadīth proscribes, there seems to be overwhelming evidence that the Prophet considered them allowable. First, there is the ḥadīth concerning the Prophet who, in passing the abode of Ḥassān ibn Thābit, heard the voice of a singing-girl, whereupon Ḥassān asked him if it were sinful to sing. To this Muḥammad replied, - "Certainly not!"<sup>4/</sup>

Two traditions of 'Ā'isha on this question are of interest. The first runs, - "Abū Bakr came in to her ('Ā'isha) in the Days of Minā, and with her were two girls playing tambourines and beating time while the Prophet was wrapped in his robe. And Abū Bakr rebuked them, but the Prophet uncovered his face and said, - "Let them alone Abū Bakr, for it is the time of the festivals".<sup>M/</sup> The second runs, - "The Apostle of Allāh came in to me ('Ā'isha) while two girls were with me singing a song (ghinā') of the Day of Bu'āth, and lay down on his side on the bed and turned away his face. Then Abū Bakr entered and rebuked me, and said, - 'The pipe of the Devil (mizmār al-shaitān) in the presence of the Apostle of Allāh!', but the Apostle of Allāh turned to him and said, 'Let them alone!'"<sup>S/</sup>

<sup>A/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 217.

<sup>Z/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 217.

<sup>4/</sup> Uṣd al-ghāba, v, 496. Cf. ii, 127. iv, 126.

<sup>M/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 224-5.

<sup>S/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 226.



Another story of 'Ā'isha is told as follows,—"Ā'isha said,—"A slave-girl was singing in my house when 'Umar asked leave to enter. As soon as she heard his steps she ran away. He came in and the Apostle smiled. 'O Apostle of Allāh' said 'Umar, what hath made thee smile?' The Apostle answered, 'A slave-girl was singing here, but she ran away as soon as she heard thy step'. 'I will not depart' said 'Umar, 'until I hear what the Apostle heard'. So the Apostle called the girl back and she began to sing, the Apostle listening to her'".<sup>3/</sup>

On another occasion, Muḥammad entered the house of Al-Rubayyi' bint Mu'awwidh, when singing-girls were singing, and one of them remarked as the Prophet entered,— "And with us is a Prophet who knoweth what shall be tomorrow". Muḥammad said,— "Leave off that and say what thou wast saying (singing)".<sup>Q/</sup>

We also read that the women greeted Muḥammad's arrival from the housetops with recitation (inshād) set to melody (lahn), and accompanied with tambourines (duff).<sup>I/</sup> Finally, there is the story of 'Ā'isha who took to one of the Anṣār, his bride. When she returned, Muḥammad said to her, "Did you lead the girl to her husband?", and 'Ā'isha answered "Yes". He then said, "And did you not send someone with her who could sing?" and 'Ā'isha answered "No". Then the Prophet said,— "Surely you knew that the Anṣār are people who delight in the ghazal (love song)".<sup>W/</sup>

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<sup>3/</sup> Kashf al-mahjūb, 401.

<sup>Q/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 745.

<sup>I/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 224.

<sup>W/</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 178.



Although some legists imagined that the Qur'ānic condemnation of poets & poetry was directed equally against music, others held the view that poetry was "allowable", and since the song issued from poetry, this too must be lawful. The author of the 'Iqd al-farīd says, - "People differ in regard to the song (ghinā'). Most of the people of Al-Hijāz permit it, but most of those of Al-'Irāq dislike it. A part of the proof of those who allow it is that its origin is poetry, which the Prophet commanded. He incited to it, urged his 'Companions' to it, and found help in it against the Unbelievers".<sup>A/</sup> 'Ā'isha too, had said, - "Teach your children poetry which will sweeten their tongue".<sup>B/</sup> It is also recorded that Muhammad was riding one day with some friends and he asked one of them to recite the poetry of Umayya. One of them "recited a hundred lines" says the tradition, "and he (Muhammad) was saying 'Well done!', thinking them good. And when the satire in the poetry and the talking about it wearied them, they said, - 'The poetry is good, and we do not see any harm in a beautiful melody (lahn)".<sup>C/</sup>

On another occasion, Muhammad passed by a slave-girl and she immediately sang aloud, -

"Is there upon me (Woe to you),

If I am gay, any Crime?"

Muhammad answered her, - "There will be no crime, Please Allāh".<sup>D/</sup> Considerable importance was claimed for the testimony of Dīniwarī (d.895), who said that he had seen Muhammad in a vision, and that he had asked him, specially, whether he blamed music and singing, when the Prophet replied, - "I do not blame anything in it, but say to them

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<sup>A/</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 178.

<sup>B/</sup> Ibid.

<sup>C/</sup> Ibid. The poetry was evidently sung.

<sup>D/</sup> Ibid.



(who resort to music and singing) that they open before it with the Qur'ān, and close after it with the Qur'ān".<sup>E/</sup>

One of the stories in the Kitāb al-aghānī (10th cent.) seems to show that there was no specific ban on music at the dawn of Islām. The Quraish had heard that the famous poet-minstrel, Al-A'shā Maimūn ibn Qais, was on his way to meet Muhammad, and they decided to intercept him. This they did, and they endeavoured to dissuade him from his project by pointing out that Muhammad had made "unlawful" many things to ~~which~~ which Al-A'shā was strongly addicted. "And what are these?" asked the poet-minstrel. "They are fornication, gambling, usury, and wine" answered Abū Sufyān the chief of the Quraish. Had music been among the "unlawful" things, it would assuredly have been mentioned, seeing that Al-A'shā was interested in the art.<sup>X/</sup>

Tradition is fairly persistent that Muhammad tolerated<sup>a</sup> instrumental music.<sup>A/</sup> The prophet himself had said,—"Publish the marriage, and beat the round tambourine (ghirbāl)".<sup>I/</sup> His own nuptials with Khadija were celebrated with music, and so were those of his daughter Fātima.<sup>2/</sup>

Out of this maze of "tradition" or "testimony", Islām endeavoured to formulate a law on "listening to music". The four great legal schools, the ~~four great legal schools~~ Hanafī, the Mālikī, the Shāfi'ī, and the Hanbalī, broadly decided against its legality, although hundreds of treatises have been written, both by legists and laymen, to prove the opposite.

<sup>E/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 206.

<sup>X/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 85-6.

<sup>I/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 743. Lisān, sub "ghirbāl"

<sup>2/</sup> Ewliyā Chelebī, ii, 226.

<sup>A/</sup> Important passages on Muhammad & music may be found in Ibn Hajar, iii, 20. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, iv (I), 120.



Abū Ḥanīfa (699-767) is said to have "disliked singing (ghinā') and made hearing singing a sin", <sup>Z/</sup> although he appears to have looked upon musical instruments as lawful". <sup>2/</sup> Mālik ibn Anas (715-95) also forbade singing and said, - "When a man buys a slave-girl and finds that she is a singer then it is his duty to send her back". <sup>A/</sup> The Imām al-Shāfi'ī (767-820) said, - "Singing (ghinā') is a sport which is disliked and which resembles what is false; he who meddles much with it is light of understanding, you shall reject his testimony". <sup>B/</sup> Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal (780-855) disliked listening to music (al-samā'). <sup>I/</sup> Thus we see that the founders of the four sects were opposed to music, <sup>although</sup> ~~their views differed considerably.~~

In spite of the foregoing censure of Al-Shāfi'ī, it would appear that he held that music in itself was "lawful". The legist himself said, - "I do not know one of the learned in Al-Ḥijāz who disliked music and singing except what consisted in amatory descriptions; as for the ḥudā' (caravan song) and the mention of the traces of the encampment and of the spring pastures <sup>S/</sup> and the making beautiful of the voice in singing poems, it is permitted". <sup>D/</sup> His school holds therefore, that it is lawful to sing and to listen to the ḥudā' and the like, but interdicts all other singing that is not accompanied by musical instruments. Yet, even these latter are banned if they tend to excite unlawful desires, and among the instruments so banned are the 'ūd, sanj, nāy al-'irāqī, barbat, rabāb, &c. These

<sup>Z/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 202.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Hidāya, iii, 558.

~~Important passages on Muhammad and music are found in the Hidāya, iii, 20. See also, Theodoret, iii, 10.~~

<sup>A/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 201.

<sup>B/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 201.

<sup>I/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 204.

<sup>S/</sup> This refers to the prelude to the gasida, which, when used by itself is called a qit'a.

<sup>D/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 242-3.



were instruments used by professional musicians, and their employment was for mere æsthetic or illicit pleasure, and were thereby condemned. <sup>M/</sup> Al-Ghazālī himself says that the objection to these instruments is "in so far as they are the badges of people who drink and of the mukhannathūn". <sup>I/</sup> On the other hand, the tabl, shāhīn, qadīb, ghirbāl (or duff), were "permissible" instruments, because they were used by pilgrims. <sup>2/</sup>

According to the general reading of the Shāfi'ī law, any of the "unlawful" instruments can be broken or destroyed (under certain conditions) without the breaker or destroyer incurring any liability. <sup>H/</sup> The legal question turns on whether the instruments are "property" or not. If these instruments are "unlawful" they cannot be owned by a Muslim, and therefore cannot be property, and so a Muslim can destroy them. Thus says the Shāfi'ī school. The Ḥanafī school argue that they are "property" and in consequence are "capable of yielding a lawful advantage". <sup>X/</sup> The fact that they can be used for "unlawful" purposes does not alter their value as property. It is laid down by this school that - "If a person break a barbat, tabl, mizmār, or duff of a Muslim.....he is responsible, the sale of such articles being lawful". Some say that the difference between the two schools obtains only in regard such instruments as are used merely for amusement. <sup>W/</sup>

There were certain classes of thefts which were punishable by amputation of the hand, but the Shāfi'ī

<sup>M/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 214. Al-Nawāwī, 515.

<sup>I/</sup> The drum called the kūba was condemned on account of its use by these people.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 214, 237, 743.

<sup>H/</sup> Al-Nawāwī, 200.

<sup>X/</sup> Abū Ḥanīfa had a neighbour <sup>who</sup> sang, and he once bailed him out of the hands of the watch, because he "missed his voice". <sup>I</sup> Iqd al-farīd, iii, 181.

<sup>W/</sup> Al-Hidāya, iii, 558-9.

*Abd Rabbihi*



school said that- "The hand of the thief is not cut off according to the two disciples for stealing a duff, tabl, or mizmār, because, in their opinion, these articles bear no price". The Hanafī school points out that the thief could say that he stole them to destroy them.<sup>D</sup> The same law applied to the tunbūr or other stringed instruments (ma'azif).<sup>E</sup>

The actual purveyor of music also felt the hand of the condemnation of the legists. At the time of Hārūn al-Rashīd a musician was denied ordinary justice in the courts. The Imām al-Shāfi'ī had laid it down that ~~the~~ the "testimony" of a person who indulged in music was untrustworthy. According to the Hidāya, "the testimony of women that lament or sing is not admissible, because they are guilty of forbidden actions, inasmuch as the Prophet has prohibited these two species of noise".<sup>F</sup> In the Tanbīh of Abū Ishāq al-Shīrāzī, singers in general are included in this law.<sup>A</sup> The Hidāya also stipulates that - "It is not lawful to give a pledge for the wages either of a mourner or of a singer".<sup>B</sup>

When one views all these pains and penalties which have been directed against music, it is a wonder that the art ever thrived at all under Islām. But the truth is, that in spite of the rigours of the legists and theologians, the law concerning "listening to music" has been honoured more in the breach than in the observance. Sinners in this respect always had a back-door of escape, which is well illustrated by a story in the 'Iqd al-farīd. A

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D. Al-Hidāya, ii, 92.

E. Ibid., ii, 89.

F. Ibid., ii, 687.

A. Al-Tanbīh, 386.

B. Al-Hidāya, iv, 212.



certain prominent man of ~~the~~ Al-Hijāz was making the pilgrimage to Mecca, and he was found lying on his prayer-mat, singing. A kinsman, who passed by, reproved him saying "Allāh forbid that I should hear you do the like of this, and you a pilgrim". The offending one replied, - "Oh son of my brother, and are you not listening to me?" <sup>A/</sup> The law condemns not only the singer or player, but also the listener! <sup>B/</sup>

Islām never really eradicated the pagan ideals of the Arab so far as music is concerned. Although the charge that the opposition to "listening" (al-samāʿ) was fabricated to a considerable extent by the theologians of the ʿAbbāsīd era may have much to support it, yet there can be little doubt that Muḥammad was indirectly responsible for the germ of the opposition. <sup>C/</sup>

There are some writers who account for Muḥammad's attitude on purely physiological grounds. In him, the senses appear to have been quite abnormally developed. His sense of smell was a veritable burden to him. He was hypersensitive in the matter of touch. Gastronomic affairs almost became a mania with him. He had visions. He was afflicted with hummings in the ears, and heard the sounds of cats, hares, and bells, which caused him much annoyance if not suffering. Even the jingling of the caravan bells troubled him. In such an extraordinary structure, a veritable slave to hyperaesthesia, one might reasonably expect to find a mind temperamentally averse to music, or at least, insensible to its charms and beauties. To the same cause has been attributed his lack of rhythmic instinct. <sup>I/</sup>

A/ Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi, iii, 178. B/ D'Ohsson, Tab.Gen., ii, 188.

C/ A Muslim has said, - "Nowhere do we see pious men more given to falsehood than in tradition" (Noeldeke, Gesch. des Qurans, 22). It does not follow however, that all were conscious frauds, for we must remember Muḥammad's saying, - "Whatever good saying has been said, I myself have said it". And again, - "You must compare the sayings attributed to the Qurʾān; what agrees therewith is from me, whether I actually said it or no". See Goldziher, Muḥ.Stud., 48.

I/ Lammens, [250-3. iii]



It is very easy, however, to overstate the physical and psychical reflexes in Muhammad, and <sup>there is</sup> in fact, many a hadīth to counter objections on these lines. It has been shown by Hartwig Herschfeld that this so-called "lack of rhythmic instinct" was really a deliberate attempt by Muhammad to ignore prosodical forms lest he should be taken for a mere soothsayer or magician. "The general form of any sort of public announcement being poetic, ~~as~~ Muhammad had to avoid all imitation of it, and this gave him immense trouble". Yet although he only just managed to escape from the "ditty" form of the urjūza (verses in rajaz), he could not evade the saj' (rhymed prose).<sup>2/</sup>

Muhammad's attitude towards music might be explained on ~~much~~ somewhat similar lines. The kind of music that accompanied the poetry which gloried in the ideals of Paganism, he had to avoid. He may not have been blessed with the "beautiful voice" himself, with which to deliver his "Revelations", but he realized the value of it. He favoured Abū Maḥdura on account of his "beautiful voice", whilst he likened the chanting (qarā'a) of Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī to "a pipe (mizmār) from the pipes of David".<sup>W/</sup> Yet this chanting of the Qur'ān would have to be different from the singing of poetry, if Muhammad would keep his hearers' minds away from Paganism, and so a legal fiction arose which determined that the "cantillation" (taghbīr)<sup>S/</sup> of the Qur'ān and the tahlīl,

<sup>2/</sup> Herschfeld, 37.

<sup>W/</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī, iii, 176. Al-Ghazālī, 209.

<sup>S/</sup> D.B. Macdonald, quoting from Sayyid Murtada's Ithāf al-Sāda, writes ta'bīr ("expression"), but Ibn Khaldūn, both in Quatremère's text and in Von Hammer's translation has taghbīr. Cf. Dozy, Glossaire, 13. Abū Ishāq al-Zajjāj (d. 922) made it taghbīr, and explained its derivation from ghābir.



was merely a modulation of the voice which could be grasped by the learned and unlearned in music alike, <sup>it</sup> being of a different genre from the song proper (ghinā'), which belonged to the professional musician.<sup>4/</sup> The "cantillation" of the Qur'ān is said to have been introduced by 'Uбайд-  
allāh ibn Abī Bakr, the governor of Sijistān (appointed 697), but it evidently had an earlier existence.

The adhān (call to prayer) was instituted by Muhammad himself, in the first or second year of the hijra, and Bilāl the Abyssinian, was the first mu'adhdhin (caller).<sup>A/</sup> The adhān too is considered a "cantillation" like that of the Qur'ān, but in spite of the legal distinction between "cantillation" and "singing", we are assured by Ibn Qutaiba (d.ca. 889) that the Qur'ān was sung to no different rules than those of the ordinary artistic song (al-hān al-ghinā') and the caravan song (hūdā').<sup>M/</sup> Indeed, it was openly said that if melodies (al-hān) were to be considered "unlawful", then the "cantillations" of the Qur'ān and the adhān were equally so, and had better be dispensed with.<sup>S/</sup> The cantillation of the Qur'ān was, indeed, proscribed by the Maliki school, although allowed by the Shāfi'i.<sup>C/</sup> All the schools, except the Hanbalī, allowed the adhān.

Besides these "allowable" musical customs, <sup>there</sup> were those of Pagan Arabia, which Islām was impotent in restricting, as in many other ~~ways~~ of the moving social Semitic forces. Like the Christian Roman Emperors, Muhammad had to adapt himself to the social resistance,

A/ Al-Bukhārī, i, 209. Mishkāt al-masābīh, i, 141.

M/ Ibn Qutaiba, 265.

S/ Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, iii, 178.

C/ Ibn Khaldūn, ii, 357.

D/ Abū'l-Fidā' says, - "The Arabs of the Days of Idolatry did things which Islām has accepted".

<sup>4/</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, ii, 359.



when he found that he could not mould it to his ~~wishes~~, and in this way the Pagan festivals, with all their malānī or "forbidden pleasures", came into acceptance under fresh sanctions. became a necessity.<sup>O/</sup>

First there were the old Pagan songs of the pilgrimage, the tahlīl and talbiyya, which were turned favourably to the account of Islām, and became "lawful", even to the "allowability" of the tabl (drum) and shāhīn (fife) as an accompaniment.<sup>A/</sup> Music for the pilgrimage

The song of war, i.e. of inciting to war against the unbeliever, was allowable because it "summons a man to warfare by inciting courage and by moving wrath and anger against the unbelievers". The actual battle-song, such as that in the rajaz verses, was allowed on the same grounds. The legists "allowed" what they could not prevent in most cases, ~~because many of these customs were too~~ deeply ingrained in the Semite to be plucked out by a fiat. It had been the custom of 'Alī and Khālid, and other valiant "Companions" of the Prophet.<sup>B/</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi \ says, - "Is there any timorous one, from whom courage has flown, who sings the words of Jarīr, -

"Say to the coward when the saddle delays,

'Art thou from partnership in death escaping?'"

except that his spirit returns and his heart becomes strong".<sup>O/</sup> Yet the shāhīn was forbidden in the camp lest its plaintive sound should "soften the heart".<sup>M/</sup>

<sup>A/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 220.

<sup>O/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 221.

<sup>M/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 222.

<sup>B/</sup> Al-Ghazālī, 222.

<sup>O/</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 177. I have read in the one of the chronicles of the Crusades, that the Muslims had to banish flutes from their camp for a similar reason.



The naḥ or elegy was lawful, for this was too valuable an asset to Islām, despite its Pagan character, to be set aside. The wilwāl or wailing, was however, forbidden (save in certain cases), but in spite of all the pains and penalties, and all the centuries, it still remains. <sup>A/</sup>

Then there was the music of the feasts and festivals such as abounded in Pagan Arabia. This too found a place in the public festivals connected with the faith of Islām, such as exists today in the ʿĪd al-adha, the ʿĪd al-fitr, the yaum ʿashūra, and the various mawālīd. <sup>I/</sup> Music was "allowed" when joy was "allowed", such as on the days of private festivals like betrothals, weddings, births, circumcisions. Finally, the love-song was "allowable".

Yet there was something that even the legists had not taken into account, and that was the "spiritual" effects of music. It was this that had given the soothsayer and magician of old, that wonderful power over the people, and strange to say, the legists did not apprehend it. Tradition had it, that the Prophet David had brought the birds and beasts to listen by means of his voice, and the two and seventy <sup>different</sup> notes from his "blessed throat". <sup>H/</sup> People that heard his voice died of rapture. <sup>E/</sup> The mysterious power of music was something that the Arabs could see for themselves in every-day life. They saw the camel alter its pace according to rhythm, <sup>2/</sup> deer were rendered docile, <sup>3/</sup>

<sup>A/</sup> ʿAlī Bey, i, 183.

<sup>I/</sup> The ʿĪd al-adha (sacrificial feast) is held on the 10th dhūʾl-hijja, and it is the actual day that the Pagan Arabs of old sacrificed in the Vale of Minā.

<sup>H/</sup> Mirkhwānd, ii (i), 57. iii,

<sup>E/</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi, 179. Kashf al-mahjūb, 402.

<sup>2/</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi, iii, 177. Al-Ghazālī, 219.

<sup>3/</sup> Kashf al-mahjūb, 400



snakes charmed, bees made to alight,<sup>4/</sup> and birds dropped dead <sup>5/</sup> at the sound of music. There is an abundant literature which tells us of people who have been deeply influenced by music.<sup>W/</sup> Yet what connection has this "spiritual" music to that which the legists said was the purveyor of drunkenness and fornication? The sūfī shall answer.

"Music and singing do not produce in the heart that which is not in it" says Abū Sulaimān al-Dārānī (d. ca. 820).<sup>0/</sup> and so those who are affected by music ~~music~~ can be divided into two classes as has been done by Al-Hujwīrī (11th cent.) the author of the Kashf al-mahjūb, as follows, - (1) Those <sup>who</sup> hear the spiritual meaning, and (2) Those who hear the material sound. "There are good and evil results in each case" says this author. "Listening to sweet sounds produces an effervescence of the substance moulded in man; true, if the substance be true, false, if the substance be false. When the stuff of man's temperament is evil, that which he hears will be evil too".<sup>A/</sup> Then he goes on to quote Muḥammad in the saying, - "O Allāh let us see things as they are". So, says our author, "right audition consists in hearing everything as it is in quality and predicament". Thus the sūfī looked upon music as a means of "revelation" attained through ecstasy.

Dhū'l-Nūn says, - "Listening (al-samā') is a divine influence which stirs the heart to seek Allāh; those who listen to it spiritually attain to Allāh, and those who listen to it sensually fall into heresy". Another sūfī,

4/ Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 177

ii, 27: iii, 28.

5/ Al-Isfahānī, v, 52. Al-Ghazālī, 219. Sa'dī, Gulistān.

W/ Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 198. Al-Ghazālī, 715.

Kashf al-mahjūb, 407.

0/ Al-Ghazālī, 220.

A/ Kashf al-mahjūb, 402-3.



Al-Shiblī says, - "Listening is outwardly a temptation and inwardly an admonition". Says Abū'l-Husain al-Darrāj, - "Listening.....causes me to find the existence of the Truth beside the Veil". ✓

In the sūfī conception of music, such as we have in Al-Hujwīrī and Al-Ghazālī, <sup>S</sup>/ we see much of what the modern Schopenhaur taught. To him, music is the eternal will itself, and through it one can pierce the Veil, witness the Watcher, and behold the Unseen. <sup>X</sup>/ Thus was music called in as the handmaid of Islām after all, and as such it is recognized in every Islāmic land, in spite of Islām.

(2).

Of the musicians contemporary with Muḥammad, several have been mentioned in the preceding chapter. Besides these, ~~and~~ there were a few who came in personal contact with the Prophet, and on that account are mentioned here.

Bilāl ibn Riyāḥ (Rabāḥ or Ribāb) al-Ḥaḡashī (d.641) was the son of an Abyssinian slave-girl who had been ransomed by Abū Bakr. He was one of the first converts to Islām, and suffered for it. Muḥammad called him "The First-Fruits of Abyssinia", and made him his purse-bearer. To him the Prophet once said, "O Bilāl, sing a ghazal". He was the first mu'adhḡhin (Caller to Prayer) in Islām, and is considered nowadays the patron saint of those who follow this calling. Bilāl died at Damascus, where his tomb may be seen. <sup>I</sup>/

(of Al-Hujwīrī)

<sup>S</sup>/ The Kashf al-maḡjūb ✓ and the section on music in the Iḡyā 'ulūm al-dīn of Al-Ghazālī, have been translated into English. See Bibliography.

<sup>X</sup>/ Al-Ghazālī, 720.

<sup>I</sup>/ Ibn Hishām, 205. Caetani, iii, 99. Ewliyā Cheleḡī, ii, 91-2, 111-12. Al-Nawawī, 176.



Shīrīn is the name of the singing-girl of Ḥassān ibn Thābit, as mentioned by Al-Hujwīrī, and it is not improbable that she is ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ (Sīrīn) the slave-girl, who, with her sister Māriya the Copt, was sent to the Prophet by Muqāqis the governor of Egypt in 630. Sīrīn was handed ~~xxxxxxxx~~ over to Ḥassān, whilst Māriya became one of the Prophet's wives. During the "Orthodox Khalifate" we read that a famous songstress 'Azza al-Mailā sang the songs of an early songstress (ḡaina) named Sīrīn, who may have been identical with the Sīrīn or Shīrīn of Ḥassān. <sup>A</sup>✗

The names of three other singing-girls have come down to us from this period in consequence of their being doomed for destruction by the prophet just prior to his entrance into Mecca as conqueror in 630. Their sole "crime" was that they had sung satirical songs against him. The first of these singing-girls was Sāra, who belonged to 'Amr ibn Hāshim (or Hishām) ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib. She escaped death by "opportune submission". <sup>D</sup>✗ Qurainā (Kurinnā, Fartannā) and Qarība (Arnab), who were in the service of 'Abdallāh (ibn Hilāl) ibn Khaṭal al-Adramī, were also proscribed. Only Qurainā suffered the death penalty. <sup>E</sup>✗

From a comparatively modern <sup>Turkish</sup> authority, Ewliyā Chelebi (d. ca. 1680), we learn the names of three male musicians who are said to have performed before the Prophet. Only one of these names has a classical attestation, and that is 'Amr ibn Umayya, although we get no mention of his musical accomplishments from this source. <sup>B</sup>✗

A ✗ Al-Tabarī, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ See index.

Al-Isfahānī, iv, 14. Guidi, looks upon them as separate individuals.

D ✗ Muir, Muhammad, 411.

E ✗ Al-Tabarī, i, 1626, 1640-2. Al-Wāqidī, 334.  
Caetani, ii (1), 134.

B ✗ Caetani, i, 283.



Yet the tradition can scarcely be of late origin, seeing that two of these individuals are claimed as patron saints of musical fraternities. The three musicians <sup>mentioned</sup> ~~mentioned~~ by Ewliyā Chelebī are,--

‘Amr ibn Umayya Dhamirī, also called Bābā ‘Amr, or ‘Amr ‘Iyar, is said to have played the tambourine (dā’ira) at the wedding of ‘Alī and Fāṭima, and all tambourine players look upon him as their patron saint. <sup>A</sup> He was one of the "Companions" of the Prophet.

Hamza ibn Yatīm (or Yatīma) is said to have sung with Bilāl in the presence of the Prophet, and to have been girded by ‘Alī (or Salmān the persian). He is also said to have sung at the wedding of ‘Alī and Fāṭima. He is the patron saint of all singers, and his tomb is pointed out at Tā’if. <sup>O</sup>

Bābā Sawandīk was an Indian who is credited with having played the kettle-drum called kūs in the prophet's military expeditions. He is said to have been buried at Mauṣil near Jarjīsh. <sup>O</sup>

It is highly probable that the need for patron saints may <sup>a</sup> ~~have~~ given the origin to these traditions. So far as Al-Hijāz and the interior are concerned, the literature of the "Days of Ignorance" only allows the women-folk and the singing-girls as the purveyors of instrumental music, although singers were to be found in both sexes.

<sup>A</sup> Ewliyā Chelebī, ii, 226, 234.

<sup>O</sup> Ewliyā Chelebī, ii, 113, 226, 233, 234.

<sup>O</sup> Ewliyā Chelebī, ii, 226.



CHAPTER III.

THE ORTHODOX KHALIFS.

(632-661).

*graceful*

"And the first of those who sang the ~~musical~~ music ~~song~~ (ghina' al-raḡīq) in Islām, was Tuwais".

Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi. (d. 940).

.....

Upon the death of the Prophet in 632, the faithful elected a successor in the person of Abū Bakr, whom they saluted as Khalīfa ("Successor"). Three succeeding khalifs were also elected by the suffrages of the Muslims, and these "successors" were 'Umar (634), 'Uthmān (644), and 'Alī (656). No sooner had the Prophet passed away, than Arabia was torn asunder by dissension. False prophets arose on every side, and the tribes, from distant 'Umān to the very threshold of Al-Medīna, the capital, were in open revolt against the khalifate, and in avowed apostasy from Islām. Yet, within a year, the dissident crowd was brought back to the political and religious fold. To effect this however, huge armies had been set in motion, and the spirit of warfare against the infidel in general, was roused to its highest pitch. Babylonia, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Egypt, were invaded and conquered (633-43), ~~was~~ a circumstance which was of great cultural significance to the coming Muslim civilisation.

The days of the four Rāshidūn or "Orthodox" khalifs, were the strict days of Islām, when the letter of the law as laid down, or implied, by the Prophet, or such interpretations of it as the "Companions of the Prophet"

1. A dirham (dīrḡam) was a silver coin, worth 40 ḡasās, and twenty of these were a ḡasās (ḡasāsī), a gold coin, and twenty of these were a ḡasās (ḡasāsī).

2. Umar, Caliph., 190.



thought it their duty to declare, ~~was~~<sup>was</sup> rigidly enforced. Music was banned. Ibn Khaldūn, the greatest of Muslim historians, says that at the beginning of Islām, everything which did not fall in with the teachings of the Qur'ān was scorned, ~~and~~ whilst the song and pantomime were forbidden. On the other hand, a modern Muslim historian, Sayyid Amīr 'Alī, is of opinion that music was not proscribed until the later legists came on the scene. <sup>1/</sup>

The first two khalifs had possibly, little love for, nor any interest in music. They were certainly too busy with the sword in consolidating Islām, to dally much with any of the arts. They practised the utmost simplicity of life themselves, and expected it in others. They knew that the arts could not be indulged in without ostentation and even prodigality, both of which were frowned on by these khalifs. We know that one of the charges brought against the famous Arab general, Abū Mūsā, was that he had bestowed a thousand pieces of silver <sup>(darāhim)</sup> ~~(dinars)~~ <sup>1/</sup> upon a poet. <sup>2/</sup>

Since general culture is primarily dependent upon the social & political regimen, and this is nowhere more conspicuously evident than in the khalifate, it will be my plan, in each chapter, to deal with the individual khalifs and rulers, for here we get the proper index of things.

~~In spite of the puritanical ruling of Abū Bakr, there appear to have been a goodly few who indulged in the palatial. Nature is not to be for ever tame and the restraint too often comes, and in casting off its~~

~~unrestrainedly set sudden bursts likewise through the~~

<sup>1/</sup> Syed Ameer Ali, Short Hist., 457.

<sup>2/</sup> A dirham (pl. darāhim) was a silver coin something like a sixpence, and twenty of them made a dīnār (pl. danānīr), a gold coin, not unlike a half-sovereign.

<sup>2/</sup> Muir, Caliph., 180.



## (I)

Under Abū Bakr (632) it may be taken for granted that music, as part and parcel of the malāhī or "forbidden pleasures", was interdicted. Precise <sup>evidence</sup> ~~is~~ however, is wanting. The singing-girls (qaināt), who were slaves in the households of the ~~wealthy~~ noble & wealthy families, were possibly not interfered with, but it is fairly certain that those of the taverns, as well as other musicians, ~~were~~ were suppressed, or at least, dared not follow their avocation, save perhaps in certain circumstances. ~~The singer/~~ The singer/ of elegies (nā'ih, fem. nā'ihā) <sup>was</sup> ~~probably~~ probably tolerated for the reason that the elegy (naḥ) was not considered music like the song called ghinā'. Al-Tabarī has recorded that two singing-girls named Thabjā al-Ḥaḍramiyya and Hind bint Yāmīn, had their hands cut off and their teeth pulled out, so that they could not play or sing. This was done by Al-Muhājir when he subdued Al-Yaman in 633, and it received the approbation of Abū Bakr. Yet this punishment was not necessarily occasioned by the fact that they were musicians, but merely because they had sung songs, to the accompaniment of a reed-pipe (mizmār), which had satirized the Muslims. ~~N.~~

In spite of the puritanical régime of Abū Bakr, there appear to have been a goodly few who indulged in the malāhī. "Nature is not to be for ever thus pent up; the rebound too often comes; and in casting off its shackles, humanity not seldom bursts likewise through the

~~N.~~ Al-Tabarī, 1, 2014. Al-Balādhurī, 102. Caetani, 11 (2)



barriers of Faith. The gay youth of Islām, cloyed with the dull delights of the sequestered harīm, were tempted thus when abroad to evade the restrictions of their creed, and seek in the cup, in music, games, and dissipation, the excitement which the youth & lighthearted will demand".<sup>1/</sup> But there were days of greater freedom in store.

<sup>from</sup> 'Umar (634) seems to have been little different ~~ultra~~ his predecessor in this respect. According to a hadīth of 'Ā'isha, 'Umar had heard a singing-girl in the very household of the Prophet.<sup>2/</sup> This may have influenced him in favour of the singing-girls. It is also said that he trembled at the thought that the Qur'ān should be recited otherwise than in melodious tones.<sup>3/</sup> 'Āsim, his son, was particularly devoted to music, whilst one of the khalif's governors, Al-Nu'mān ibn Adī, who controlled Maisān, was certainly a patron of the art.<sup>W/</sup>

On the other hand, there is a story told by Ibn al-Faqīh al-Hamadnānī (fl.902) that <sup>(on one occasion when)</sup> 'Umar heard slave-girls playing their tambourines (dufāf) and singing that "Life is made for pleasure", <sup>(he)</sup> ~~Umar~~ upraised and cudgelled them for this.<sup>4/</sup> But one must ask whether his disapproval was on account of the song or the sentiments expressed? The latter is the more likely, since we have the tradition that 'Umar was abroad one day when the sound of the tambourine reached his ears. 'Umar asked, - "What is this?" He was told it was a circumcision, when we are told that 'Umar held his peace.<sup>M/</sup>

<sup>1/</sup> Muir, Caliph. 185.      <sup>2/</sup> Kashf al-Mahjūb, 401.

<sup>3/</sup> Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt al-kabīr, v, 42.

<sup>W/</sup> Ibn Hishām, 782.

<sup>4/</sup> Ibn al-Faqīh, Bibl. Geog. Arab., v, 43.

<sup>M/</sup> Tāj al-'arūs, sub 'azifa. See also, - Ibr. Khallikān, I, 359.



Several stories are told in the ‘Iqd al-farīd concerning ‘Umar and music. In one of these, ‘Umar, when asking a man to sing added, - "May Allāh forgive you for it", which clearly shows how he stood in regard <sup>to</sup> the conventional ban. Two nobles of the Quraish (one of them being ‘Asim ibn ‘Amr) whom he heard <sup>2</sup> singing, were called "asses" by ‘Umar. On both occasions the singing was the rakbanī of the naṣb, which had tacitly been acknowledged as "allowable". <sup>7</sup> ‘Umar was wont to make a tour of Al-Medīna at night so as to see that there were no infractions of the law. <sup>A</sup> Once he came to a house where the master was listening to the ~~voice~~ voice of his singing-girl and indulging in the wine-cup. ‘Umar burst in upon the scene crying, - "Shame on thee". The shamed one turned the tables on the khalif by retorting, - "Shame on thee for violating the sanctity of the household, which is forbidden by the word of Allāh". <sup>1</sup> The author of the Kitāb al-aghānī says, - "It has been said that ~~Qasim~~ Khalif ‘Umar had composed a song, but nothing ~~less~~ is less probable". Possibly, the historians had confused this khalif with the later ‘Umar II (717-20) who was certainly a composer. Yet ‘Umar I has been claimed as a poet by Ibn Hajar, <sup>2</sup> and Ibn Duraid. <sup>3</sup> ~~From the Rashidun Khalifs to the Umayyad dynasty, the art~~ <sup>had</sup> ~~became~~ <sup>even</sup> a study worthy of the very "successors" of the Prophet.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihī, iii, 178-9.

<sup>1</sup> Lammens, iii, 275. Cf. al-Ṭabarī, I, 2742.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Hajar, ii, 21.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Duraid, Ishtiqāt, 225. Cf. Al-Balādhurī, 99.

<sup>A</sup> Cf Syed Ameer Ali, Short History, 67.



(2)

‘Uthmān (644) was the next khalif, and under him a great change came to the social and political life of the Arabs. Unlike his predecessor, ‘Umar, who was content to sit on the steps of the mosque at Al-Medīna eating his barley-bread and dates, ‘Uthmān was fond of wealth and display. With the vast treasure and crowd of captives which kept pouring into Al-Hijāz from conquered lands, the Arabs were able to build up for themselves such glories as they had seen and envied in other Arabian lands, as well as in Persia and <sup>parts of</sup> the Byzantine Empire, which had fallen to their swords. Georgeous palaces, large retinues of slaves, brilliant equipages, and sumptuous living, became the order of the day not only in Al-‘Irāq and Syria, which already knew of these things, but even in the holy cities of Al-Hijāz. In all the palaces and houses of the wealthy, music & musicians came in for special indulgence, in spite of the averred ban of the Prophet, and the murmurs of the puritans.

‘Alī (656-61) was himself a poet, and he was the first khalif who extended any open and real protection to the fine arts and letters, by authorizing the study of the sciences, poetry, and music.<sup>3/</sup> From this date, the future of music was assured, and when the khalifate passed from the rāshidūn khalifs to the Umayyad dynasty, the art <sup>had</sup> become

even a study worthy of the very "successors" of the Prophet.

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3/ ~~W. W. Rieu, p. 18.~~ Salvador-Daniel, 20.

Clearly, the Arabs were too jealous of encroachments upon that sacred and superior thing called Arab nationality, to permit of "foreign" ways and customs. Every word of Khalif



(2)

The general position of music and musicians, together with considerable details of the theory and practice of the art in the first days of the khalifate, seem fairly well defined by the annalists. In the first half-century of Islām, the conditions, as we have seen, were scarcely propitious for the arts. Not only were men's minds centred on the battle throng, but the austerity of life under the new régime, left little room for these things. In Pagan days, the tribes would dispute the pre-eminence of one poet over another, but now they squabbled over the precise way of reading the Qur'ān. But there were new social and political forces at work in Al-Hijāz. The propagation of Islām by the sword brought its own revenge. The Arab armies had reclaimed Babylonia and Mesopotamia from the Persians; Syria and Egypt had been wrested from Byzantium; and finally, the great land of Persia itself, had been conquered. The banner of Islām had not only linked up the two extremes of Arab social life, the nomad of the desert and the cultured citizens of Al-Hīra, Al-Yaman, and Ghassān, but it had brought them in touch with civilisations which were more cultured & refined than anything which Al-Hijāz, the political centre, had hitherto seen. The result was that Al-Medīna, the seat of the khalifate, became "the centre of attraction, not to the hosts of Arabia only, but also to enquirers from abroad. Here flocked the Persian, the Greek, the Syrian, the 'Irāqian, and the African".<sup>W</sup> The influence of these people cannot be ignored, although the induction of alien elements must not be overstated. Clearly, the Arabs were too jealous of encroachments upon that sacred and superior thing called Arab nationality, to permit of "foreign" ways and customs <sup>(to any great degree.)</sup> Every word of Khalif



'Umar tells us this. <sup>A/</sup> Islām meant much in the days that we are dealing with, but the word "Arab" meant more. <sup>B/</sup>

We have seen that during the "Days of Idolatry", music, as a profession, was in the hands of the women-folk and slave-girls, at any rate in Al-Ḥijāz and the peninsula generally. This continued for the first decade of the khalifate. During the reign of 'Uthmān (644-56) however, <sup>C/</sup> a new figure appears in Al-Ḥijāz, - the male professional musician. He was quite common in Persia and Al-Ḥīra, whilst in Byzantium and Syria he had had a place from time immemorial. It is worthy of note from whence this innovation sprang. The first male professional musicians in Al-Ḥijāz belonged to a class known as the mukhannathūn (sing. mukhannath), who were evidently unknown in Pagan times. <sup>C/</sup> These people were an effeminate class who dyed their hands, and affected the habits of women. <sup>S/</sup> The first male professional musician in the days of Islām, is generally acknowledged to be Tuwais, the mukhannath, and indeed, it is said that "in Al-Medīna, <sup>music</sup> ~~music~~ (ghinā') had its origin with the mukhannathūn". <sup>X/</sup>

The circumstance scarcely augured well for music. Already, the purists of Islām had proscribed <sup>(this art)</sup> ~~music~~, or at any rate, looked upon it as something disreputable. No wonder that it had become part and parcel of the malāhī or "forbidden pleasures", and linked up with drinking, gaming, and fornication, <sup>4/</sup> since the notoriety of the singing-girls of the taverns, had led to <sup>(such terms as)</sup> ~~music~~ mughanniya (female musician), sannāja (female sang player), and zammāra (female zamr player) being considered synonyms for courtesan and <sup>e/</sup> ~~adulteress~~. <sup>3/</sup> Now there was added the

A/ Al-Tabarī, i, 2751.

X/ Al-Isfahānī, iv, 161.

B/ Jurjī Zaidān, 29-31.

C/ Lane, Lexicon, s.v.

S/ For these mukhannathūn see Al-Isfahānī, i, 97, 108. ii, 170-1. iv, 35, 59, 61. Abū'l-Fidā' Annales Moslemici (Reiske), 109. Ibn Khallikān, i, 438. Kosegarten, Lib. Cant., 11. Burton, Arab Nights, Terminal Essay. Caetani, ii (1), 175. and the lexicons of Lane & Freytag.

4/ <sup>(abū)</sup> ~~mu~~ Muslim, Sahih, ii, 123. 3/ Al-'Askarī, (quoted by Lammens)



disrepute of the mukhannathūn. yet in spite of all these unpleasant associations, the art was able to throw off much of the anathema hurled against it. This was mainly owing to the interest of the upper classes, and <sup>also</sup> perhaps to the old musical traditions of Al-Medīna, the city of the Anṣār, who had always been keen lovers of the song, as even Muḥammad had testified.

At first, all the professional musicians, both male and female, came from the servile class, slaves or free-folk. These latter were called mawālī (sing. maulā). Ibn Khaldūn has said that the Arabs, in their exercise of military command and government service <sup>were</sup> led ~~was~~ to look upon the arts with scorn, thus leaving their study and cultivation to the mawālī, for the most part Persians. That is substantially true. The Arabs looked upon themselves as the elect of Allāh, the aristocracy of nations, whose only "business" was to be that of ~~warrior~~ the warrior. <sup>however, that they</sup> It does not mean ~~warrior~~ ceased to be interested in the arts, for never before in the history of the East, did they flourish as they did under the khalifate. Nor, does it mean, as so many have assumed, that the arts <sup>which were</sup> ~~warrior~~ encouraged were alien importations. <sup>A</sup> Nothing can be further from the truth. We may talk about music being an international language, but to the Arab, it could not be divorced from song. He had his own national dispositions, and perhaps pre-dispositions, to be satisfied on the purely melodic & rhythmic side, which no alien music could do. He had an indigenous musical system which was different from <sup>that of</sup> Persia and Byzantium. <sup>P</sup> The first male professional in Islām, Tuwais, was evidently an Arab, or at any rate, <sup>he</sup> was born and educated in Arabia, <sup>and schooled</sup> in the national music. <sup>S</sup> Sā'ib Khāthir, although the son of a

<sup>S</sup> The date of his birth, 632, proves this.

<sup>A</sup> 'Umar detested the Persians and would have none of their "refinements" for his people. He had the palace of Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ at Al-Kūfa burned. It had been built in imitation of the Tāq-i Khusrāu at Al-Madā'in.



Persian slave, was brought up to Arabian music, and only learned some of the tricks of the Persian art later.

'Azza al-Mailā, the first <sup>important</sup> female professional musician in Islām, boasted that she carried on the musical traditions of the old Pagan songstresses of Arabia, - Sīrīn, Zirnab, Khaula, Al-Rabāb, Salma, and Rā'iqa her own teacher. It was her renderings of the old Arabian music that brought her fame. That she also sang Persian melodies, is merely incidental, as it was with other musicians.

What the music of the Arabs was like at this period we can conjecture from the names of instruments and the various technical musical expressions.

Among stringed instruments, we read of the mi'zafa, an instrument specially supported in Al-Yaman, but common also in Al-Hijāz. The mizhar, a skin-bellied lute, also had some vogue, although it had been superseded, to a considerable extent probably, by the 'ūd, a wooden-bellied lute, introduced in the previous century from Al-Hīra. The tunbūr or pandore appears to have received greater appreciation in Al-'Irāq, where the sanj or <sup>sharp was</sup> ~~afforded~~ grace.

Among wind instruments, the vertical flute was known as the qassāba or qasba, whilst the reed-pipe was called the mizmār, the latter term being also used for any wood-wind instrument. The horn or trumpet called the būq, was also in use, and we might recall that the names for such an instrument in the Qur'an are sūr and nāqūr.

A. Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 13. Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 93.

B. Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 13-14.

C. Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 93-4.

D. Al-Isfahānī, v, 161.

E. Lane, Lex., s.v.

G. Lane, Lex., s.v.

F. Al-Mufaddaliyyāt, xvii.

M. Sūras, vi, 73. lxxiv, 8.

Al-Baidāwī equates them both with būq.

(psaltery) & the  
mizaf (a kind of  
tunbur)



First among the instruments of percussion was the qadīb or rhythmic wand, popular with those who sang ~~at~~<sup>t</sup> the "improvisation". The duff or square tambourine was another favoured instrument for marking the rhythms or measures. The sunnūj saghīra were the small metal castanets, which were part of the impedimenta of the dancers. Finally, the tabl or drum was of some import.

In chamber music we do not read of a combination of these different instruments in performance, although this does not preclude the possibility of it. <sup>x</sup> Tuwais, the first male professional musician in Islām, never accompanied himself with any other instrument save the square tambourine. 'Azza al-Mailā' is usually represented <sup>(old Arabian)</sup> playing on the mi'zafa or mizhar, although she could also play the 'ūd. Sā'ib Khāthir began his career with the qadīb, but later took up the 'ūd, and he was the first in Al-Medīna to accompany his singing with the 'ūd, which looks as though the instrument had previously only been used for purely instrumental performances.

Considerable progress was made on the technical side of the art. This was due to a variety of causes. First, there were the new ideas which came to the Arabs through fresh culture contacts. Then there was the rise of a professional class of male musicians. Finally, the inordinate passion for music which found its lead in the highest circles. It was indeed, the patronage of music and musicians, by the nobility, that put the hall-mark of "respectability" and "allowableness" upon the art.

'Ā'isha, the favourite wife of the Prophet, Al-Ḥasan the grandson of Khalif 'Alī, Sukaina the daughter of Al-Ḥusain, Sa'īd ibn Abī Waqqās, 'Ā'isha bint Sa'd, Muṣ'ab ibn al-Zubair, 'Ā'isha bint Talḥa, and 'Abdallāh ibn Ja'far, were all keen supporters of music and protectors of its



professors. At a reception given by 'Ā'isha bint Talḥa the wife of Muṣ'ab ibn al-Zubair, a prominent professional songstress like 'Azza al-Mailā', who was engaged to perform, was treated on an equality with the noble dames of the Quraish. 'Abdallāh ibn Ja'far was a brilliant dilettante who made his palace a veritable conservatory of music.<sup>W.</sup> He was the patron of most of the eminent musicians of the day, and among them, - Tuwais, Sā'ib Khāthir, Nashīṭ, ~~many~~ Nāfi' al-Khair, Budaiḥ al-Malīḥ, Qand, and 'Azza al-Mailā'.

Fresh culture contacts first found expression in new types of song or styles of singing. The ~~many~~ ~~were~~ prisoners captured in the Persian wars were toiling as slaves on the public works at Al-Medīna, and their national melodies began to attract considerable attention. Tuwais, the leading Arab musician of the day, found it profitable to imitate their style. Later, a Persian slave named Nashīṭ, became the rage on account of the vogue for Persian airs. Sā'ib Khāthir <sup>(also realized)</sup> ~~that~~ that he had to fall in with the popular demand and supply his public with the latest craze. Even 'Azza al-Mailā', the conservatrix of the old Pagan music, had to go to Nashīṭ and Sā'ib Khāthir so as to learn these new fancies. yet, as I have pointed out in my Facts for the Arabian Musical Influence,<sup>I.</sup> there is no question of any musical theory or system being borrowed from the Persians, since it was no more than one nationality borrowing from the other a particular type of song or style of singing, <sup>(and the imitation is)</sup> expressly mentioned by Al-Isfahānī as being connected with the melody. Indeed, we know that Nashīṭ <sup>himself</sup> ~~was~~

<sup>(Now being)</sup>  
I. Published by William Reeves, London.

W. Al-Mas'ūdī, v, 385. Cf. De Meynard's translation of this passage. Jurḡī Zaidān, 89. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 198.



~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ took lessons from Sā'ib Khāthir in the Arabian type of song or style of singing.

That progress was made in the musical art at this period is stressed by the historians. We have seen that in the "Days of Idolatry" there was only one type of song known in Al-Hijāz, and that was the nash, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~, which was merely an improved huda' or caravan song. This is said to have been made up of "measures melodies" (alḥan mauzūna), but we must not suppose this meant the rhythm (īqā') that we read of later, but rather that the melody was measured according to the prosodical feet ('arūd).

About the close of the "Orthodox" period, we read of the introduction of a more artistic genre of music called the ghina' al-mutqan, whose special feature was the application of a rhythm to the melody of the song, which was independent from the metre ('arūd) of the verse. It would appear to have been an indigenous production, and seemingly <sup>g</sup>an offshoot from metre. At any rate, it was scarcely a borrowing from the persians, who are said to have been the "inventors" of rhythm by Ibn Khurdādhbih, <sup>M</sup> if we are to credit the assertion that they were unacquainted with metre at this time. <sup>H</sup> We certainly know that subsequent to the introduction of the ghina' al-mutqan with its rhythms into Al-Hijāz, <sup>(a type of song similar to the,</sup> ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ nash was still in use at Al-Hīra, the Persian-minded city.

The conflicting claims in the Kitāb al-aghānī make it rather difficult to appreciate the actual innovations in the ghina' al-mutqan. Ibn al-Kalbī (d. 819), a most reliable traditionist, <sup>E</sup> who passed on traditions from his father, a really scientific enquirer in his way, tells us

<sup>M</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 90.

<sup>H</sup> Browne, E. G., Sources of Dawlatshāh (J.R.A.S., 1899). pp. 56, 61, 62.

<sup>E</sup> Ency. of Islām, ii, 689. [Cf. his Literary History of Persia, I, 12-14]



something about the classes of music. He says, - "Music (ghinā') is in three styles (awjū'), - the nash, the sinād, and the hazaj. Then as for the nash, then it is the music of the riders (rukḡān) and the singing-girls (qaināt). And as for the sinād, then it is the heavy refrain, full of notes (naghmat). And as for the hazaj, then it is the light (song), all of it. And it is that which stirs the hearts, and excites the forbearing". <sup>S/</sup> Evidently it was the sinād and hazaj that <sup>were</sup> ~~were~~ introduced <sup>in the ghinā' al-mutqan</sup> at the time that we are speaking of.

Al-Isfahānī informs us through a long string of authorities ending with Al-Kalbī ~~was~~ (d. 763) and Abū Miskīn, that "the first who sang in Arabic (?) in Al-Medīna was Tuwais", and again, - "the first music (ghinā') was his (Tuwais') music, with the hazaj in it, -

"Love has so emaciated me,  
That through it I am almost melting away". <sup>T/</sup>

In another place in the work of Al-Isfahānī (as though it were another Tuwais) we are told that Tuwais was "the

<sup>S/</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 186. Al-Mas'ūdī (viii, 93) on the authority of Ibn Khurdādhbih (ca. 870-92) has a slightly different version. He says, - ~~was~~ "Music (ghinā') is the nash, which comprises three genres, - the rukḡānī (= ghinā' al-rukḡān), the sinād or heavy, and the hazaj or light". The word nash appears to have got shifted from its place after genres.

The passage in Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi also occurs in the Mustatraf (15th cent.), ii, 134. Mitjana, in Le monde orientale (1906, p. 205) attributes the tradition in the Mustatraf to Abū Muḥammad al-Mundhīrī. This is an error. The author of the Mustatraf says that it is Abū Mundhir Hishām, i.e. Ibn al-Kalbī. In fact, all of the chapters dealing with music in the Mustatraf, seem to ~~be~~ <sup>have been</sup> lifted from the work of Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi.

<sup>T/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, ii, 170.



first to sing the ghinā' al-mutqan", and that he was the foremost exponent of the hazaj rhythm.<sup>1/</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi (d. 940) says, - "The first of those who sang in the time of Islām the <sup>graceful</sup> ~~new~~ music (ghinā' al-raḡiq) was Tuwais".<sup>2/</sup> Finally, Al-Iṣfahānī says, - "The first in Al-Medīna to sing the music introducing in it the rhythm (īqā')" was Tuwais.<sup>3/</sup>

It is this last tradition which appears to sum up the truth of all the others, and that is that the <sup>("graceful")</sup> ~~"new"~~ music (ghinā' al-raḡiq) or "artistic music" (ghinā' al-mutqan) was that which employed a new device of rhythmical symmetry, quite distinct from the metrical structure of the verse. The first rhythm introduced was the hazaj.

Another claimant for honours in introducing the "new music" is 'Azza al-Mallā', since it is said that "she was the first who sang the rhythmic song (ghinā' al-mūqī') in Al-Ḥijāz".<sup>4/</sup> Sā'ib Khāthir also contributed a share to the "new music", and Ibn al-Kalbī says that the song commencing, -

"Why are these homes desolated,  
The sport of wind and rain?"

which is in the rhythm called thaqīl awwal, was the first song in ~~the new music~~ the music of the Arabs of artistic and savant composition in the days of Islām.<sup>5/</sup> These rhythmic modes, which became a special feature in Arabian music, were soon extended as we shall see in the next chapter. Meanwhile, we turn <sup>to</sup> the melody itself.

1/ Al-Iṣfahānī, ~~iv~~ iv, 38.

2/ Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 187.

3/ Al-Iṣfahānī, xvi, 13.

4/ Al-Iṣfahānī, vii, 188.



Music was known by the generic term ghina', which primarily meant "song", hence muḡhannī ~~was~~ stood generally for "musician", although in ~~music~~<sup>its</sup> specific sense it implied "singer". Music ~~was~~<sup>was</sup> also called tarab, hence mutrib "musician", or from the point of view of the strict Muslim, ~~music~~<sup>was</sup> termed lahw (lit. "entertainment"), and musical instruments become malāhī. Throughout the Kitāb al-aghānī we find all the verses that were set to music superscribed with the term saut, and the word was confined strictly to "vocal music", although later it came to be used by the theorists to mean "noise" in contradistinction from tanīn ("tone") and naghma ("musical note"). An interval was called a najra in these times, although there were no names for the specific intervals, save in the nomenclature of the finger places on the lute, such as mutlaq ("open string"), sabbāba ("1st finger"), wusta ("2nd finger"), hinsir ("3rd finger"), and khinsir ("4th finger"). It is highly probably however, that at this period the terms for the tonic and octave were sajāh (or shuhāj) and siyyāh.<sup>S/</sup>

The term for melody was lahn, and ~~was~~ all serious or artistic music was composed in certain melodic modal formulas called asābi' ("fingers", sing. asba'). At first we meet with ~~these~~<sup>merely</sup> these modes described according to their najra or "course".<sup>W/</sup> There were two of these "courses", the hinsir and the wusta, which approximated to our ideas of major and minor to some extent. Later, the modes are more clearly designated by their tonics.

<sup>S/</sup> See the Mafātīḥ al-ʿulūm, 240. Land, Remarks, 157.

<sup>W/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, ii, 171. xvi, 16.



(3)

Among the names of the great musicians of the first days of Islām, are a few that have been preserved in song, story, verse, and proverb among the Arabs. Fortunately, we also have precise details of their lives, which have been handed down in that great mine of Arabian verse and history, - the Kitāb al-aghānī.

The first musician to make a name under Islām was Ṭuwais ("The Little Peacock"), whose full name was Abū 'Abd al-Munāḍim 'Isā ibn 'Abdallāh al-Dhā'ib (632-710).<sup>A/</sup> He was a freeman (maula) of the Banū Makhzūm and belonged to Al-Medīna, being brought up in the household of Arwā' the mother of Khalif 'Uthmān. Whilst a young man, he was attracted by the melodies sung by the Persian slaves who were employed on the public works, and he imitated their style.<sup>B/</sup> According to Ibn Badrūn, it was in the later years of Khalif 'Uthmān (644-66) that Ṭuwais rose to fame.<sup>C/</sup> He is highly esteemed in Arabian annals for his musical abilities. Ibn Suraij, his pupil,<sup>called</sup> ~~him~~ him the greatest singer of his day, whilst he was considered the greatest exponent of the hazaj rhythm. We have already seen that he is generally credited with being the first to sing the "graceful" and "artistic" music which was introduced at this time. Al-Iṣfahānī says that he only accompanied himself with the square tambourine (duff) which he carried in a bag,<sup>3/</sup> or in his robe.<sup>4/</sup>

Like the majority of the first male musicians at Al-Medīna at this period, he was socially an outcast, by ~~himself~~

A/ Freytag, Arab. Prov., ~~ii~~ xiii, 158. Ibn Khallikān. The proverb "More unfortunate than Ṭuwais", is due to the fact that all the events of his life, birth, circumcision, marriage, &c. happened to fall on days when one of the illustrious men of Islām died.

~~B/ Freytag, Arab. Prov., ii, 158.~~  
C/ Ibn Badrūn, 64.

3/ Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 186. 4/ Al-Iṣfahānī, ii, 174.



reason of his ~~being~~ being a mukhannath.<sup>1/</sup> Yet he was highly esteemed by the nobility. When Mu'āwiyā I (660) ascended to the Khalifate, Marwān ibn al-Hakam, the governor of Al-Medīna, offered a reward for every mukhannath that was delived into his hands. One of these, Al-Naghāsī, was put to death.<sup>5/</sup> Ṭuwais sought refuge at Suwaidā on the road to Syria. Here the old musician remained until his death, full of bitterness that his musical reputation had not exempted him from the edict of Marwān the governor. Among his pupils were, - Ibn Suraij, Al-Dalāl Nāfidh, Nauma al-Duhā, and Fand.<sup>4/</sup>

Sā'ib Khāthir (d.683) or more properly, Abū Ja'far Sā'ib ibn Yassar, was the son of a persian slave in the service of the Laith family of Al-Medīna. Given his freedom, he entered commercial life, and in his leisure hours he attended the weekly concerts of the nā'ināt (female singers of elegies) which gave him an ambition to be a singer. Devoting himself to the art, he made such progress that one day, a noble of the Quraish, 'Abdallāh ibn Ja'far, hearing him sing, took him into his service. At this time, following the practice of untutored musicians, he merely accompanied himself with the qadīb or rhythmic wand, but he soon abandoned this for the 'ūd (lute), and is credited with being the first in Al-Medīna to accompany his songs with this instrument. When Nashīṭ the Persian became the rage on account of his national airs, Sā'ib showed that he could sing the same to Arabic verse. He is also reputed to have been the originator of the thaḡīl awwal rhythm

"*more effeminate*"

FREYTAG, ARAB. PROV., VII, 124.

1/ Hence the proverb, - ~~than~~ than Ṭuwais".

3/ ~~Al-Isfahānī~~ Al-Isfahānī, ii, 171. Ṭuwais was scarcely the first mukhannath in Al-Medīna as Al-Isfahānī says. Cf. Al-Bukhārī, iv, 32. Al-Tirmidhī, i, 271. Ibn al-Athīr, Usd al-ghāba, iv, 268.

4/ Al-Isfahānī, ii, 170-76. iv, 38-9. (Guidi makes out that there were two musicians named Ṭuwais.). Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī, iii, 186. Ibn Khallikān, ii, 438.



and the first song in which he used it, is esteemed to be the first song in Arabian music of artistic ~~composition~~ composition.

When his protector, 'Abdallāh ibn Ja'far visited Khalif Mu'āwiyā I (661-80) at Damascus, he took Sā'ib with him. As the khalif was influenced by the conventional ban on music, 'Abdallāh had to introduce the musician to court as a "poet", who "embellished" his verse. After Sā'ib had given a display of his singing, which his protector had called "embellished verse", the Khalif rewarded Sā'ib with a present. During the reign of Yazīd I, the people of Al-Medīna revolted, and an army was sent against the rebels. One of the first innocent victims of the soldiery after the battle of ~~al-~~Harra, was the musician Sā'ib Khāthir. Sā'ib had four eminent pupils, - 'Azza al-Mailā', Ibn Suraij, Jamīla, and Ma'bad. <sup>V.</sup>

'Azza al-Mailā' (d. ca. 706) who received her nickname on account of her figure, was a handsome half-caste songstress of Al-Medīna. She was a pupil of an old songstress named Rā'iqa, who ~~was~~ taught her the music of olden days, such as had been sung or played by Sirīn, Zirnah, Khāula, Al-Rabāb, <sup>and</sup> Salma. Later she learned some of the Persian melodies from Nashīṭ and Sā'ib Khāthir. As a young woman, we find her with her teacher Rā'iqa, and the poet Ḥassān ibn Thābit (d. ca. 674) at the ~~same~~ festivities in Al-Medīna. This was in the reign of 'Uthmān. The weekly concerts at her house attracted a throng of dilettanti, and her influence was felt at Mecca. <sup>W.</sup> Tuwais, who attended these concerts, testifies that "the most complete propriety

<sup>V.</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vii, 188-90.

<sup>W.</sup> Al-Isfahānī, ~~vii, 188~~ x, 55.

*Al-Isfahani, vii, 188. The Hamud ibn Mu'ad mentioned by Al-Isfahani (ib. ca.) was probably a son of the above.*



obtained at them". Strict silence was demanded from the audience, and the slightest misbehavior was reproved by a stroke with a stick.<sup>Z/</sup>

The extraordinary popularity of 'Azza al-Mailā scandalized the orthodox Muslims, and during the reign of Mu'āwiyā I (661-80) they complained to Sa'īd ibn al-'Ās the governor of Al-Medīna, who would have upheld their grievance had not the famous art patron, 'Abdallāh ibn Ja'far, intervened. Many great musicians and poets sang her praises. Hassān ibn Thābit said that her performances reminded him of the artistic musical performances at the Ghassānid court in the "Days of Idolatry". Tuwais said that she was "the queen of Singers". Although she made a speciality of the old mizhar and mi'zafa, which were the instruments of the "Days of Ignorance", we have it on the authority of Ma'bad, that she excelled in playing the ūd. ~~There~~ The date of her death is not recorded, but she died before 710.<sup>A/</sup> There was a later songstress named Nā'ila bint al-Ma'ilā<sup>B/</sup> who may have been her daughter.<sup>B/</sup>

Nashīṭ was a Persian slave in the service of 'Abdallāh ibn Ja'far, who later freed him. He created a furor in Al-Medīna on account of his Persian melodies, and Arab singers were compelled to adopt persian airs for their repertory in consequence. At the same time, Nashīṭ had to take lessons from Sā'ib Khāthir in order to learn the Arabian melodies, so as to keep pace with his rivals. Nashīṭ had the honour of being one of the teachers of 'Azza al-Mailā and Ma'bad.<sup>2/</sup>

<sup>Z/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 14. The passage looks as though it <sup>was</sup> borrowed from Plato's Laws. 700.

<sup>M.A/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 13-20.

<sup>B/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, v, 176.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vii, 188. The Hammād ibn Nashīṭ mentioned by Al-Isfahānī (iv, 61) was probably a son of the above.



Hunain al-Hīrī was the usual name given to Abū Ka'b Hunain ibn Ballū' al-Hīrī (d. ca. 718). He was a native of Al-Hīra as his name implies, and he appears to have been an Arab of the Banū'l-Hārith ibn Ka'b, and a Christian, which partly explains why he is to be found among the purveyors of this illicit calling of 'music'. As a young man he followed the employment of a flower-seller, and this took him to the houses of the nobility and wealthy classes, where he became infatuated with the performances of the singing-girls, until one day, he decided to be a musician. After studying under good masters, <sup>A/</sup> he became a first-rate performer on the lute, an excellent singer, and a composer of repute. He was the first in Al-'Irāq in the time of Islām, to cultivate the artistic song in the sinād species, his predecessors, we are told, having been satisfied with the hazaj, which was, at this time, little different from the nash in Al-'Irāq. Hunain must have started his ~~musical~~ musical career in the time of 'Uthmān (644) at least. During the reign of 'Abd al-Malik (685), the governor of Al-'Irāq, Khalīd ibn 'Abdallāh al-Qasrī, interdicted music and musicians, but owing to the reputation of Hunain, the latter was permitted to follow his avocation, provided that no bad or dissolute characters were admitted to audition. When Bishr ibn Marwān, a brother of Khalīf 'Abd al-Malik, became governor, the edict was rescinded, and Hunain was summoned to his palace at Al-Kūfa, where he remained in constant attendance on this prince. About the year 718, the virtuosi of Al-Hijāz, desiring to pay

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A/ 'Umar al-Wādī and Hakam al-Wādī are mentioned as the ~~hazaj~~ teachers of Hunain, but their dates preclude the possibility of this.



homage to their venerable confrère of Al-'Irāq, invited him to Mecca. Here, an illustrious gathering of musicians, poets, and dilettanti received him with pomp and ceremony. <sup>(residence of)</sup> At the Sukaina bint al-Husain, a grand musical fête was prepared, and whilst Hunain was singing, a gallery which had become overcrowded with the audience, collapsed, and the aged musician was killed. On the authority of his son 'Ubaidallāh, Hunain is ranked among "the four great singers". I/

He became the minstrel and boon companion of 'Ubaydallāh ibn Ziyād (d. 685), who was governor of Al-Kūfa. 'Ubaydallāh ibn Ziyād al-Barmakī, the author of the Kitāb al-Musiqā, speaks of this minstrel with contempt. Al-Barmakī says that he was unrivalled as a composer and performer of the qasr. X/

Qand of Al-Medīna, was another of the musicians of the "first period", says Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, and was a freeman of Sa'īd ibn Abī 'Asqās (d. 870), and 'Ā'isha the "mother of the faithful" was particularly attracted to him. Sa'īd once thrashed Qand, and this so enraged 'Ā'isha, that she refused to speak to the noble Qurayshī until he had begged the musician's pardon. Qand was alive as late as the appointment of Sa'īd ibn al-'Ās (d. 875-78) to the governorship of Al-Medīna. X/

<sup>or Fand</sup> Fand, sometimes called Abū Zaid, was a freeman of 'Ā'isha the daughter of Sa'īd ibn Abī 'Asqās. He was a man of detached character, although a fine musician.

I/ Al-Isfahānī, ii, 120-27. <sup>the</sup> into proverb "More delaying than Fand". X/ He lived to take part in a famous musical event, the Jam'ia pilgrimage. X/

X/ Al-Isfahānī, v, 161-4.

X/ Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, iii, 166. Al-Isfahānī, vii, 165.

*Qasid* Cf. Kitāb al-Musiqā mentioned by Von Hammer, lit. der Arab., ii, 705. This Fand and the preceding Qand appear to be identical.

I/ Praying, Arab. Mus., ii, 159. III, 81.

X/ Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 60-1. vii, 165.



Aḥmad al-Nasībī, or Aḥmad ibn Asāma al-Ḥamdānī, belonged to Al-Kūfa. It seems that he must have started his career during the "Orthodox Khalifate". He was an Arab, and a kinsman of the poet A'sha Ḥamdān (d.702) whose companion he was. His singing of the poet's verses brought him fame. He was a master of the type of song called the nash, and it was due to him that it was introduced into serious music (ghinā). Apparently, he was the first in the days of Islām to make a name as a performer on the tunbūr (pandore). He became the minstrel and boon companion of 'Ubaidallāh ibn Ziyād (d.685), who was governor of Al-Kūfa. Although Jahḥa al-Barmakī, the author of the Kitāb al-tunbūriyyīn speaks of this minstrel with contempt, Al-Isfahānī says that he was unrivalled as a composer and performer on the tunbūr. X/

Qand of Al-Medīna, was another of the musicians of the "first period", says Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, and was a freeman of Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās (d.670), and 'Ā'isha the "Mother of the Faithful" was particularly attached to him. Sa'd once thrashed Qand, and this so enraged 'Ā'isha, that she refused to speak to the noble Quraishī until he had begged the musician's pardon. Qand was alive as late as the appointment of Sa'īd ibn al-'Ās (d.672-78) to the governorship of Al-Medīna. 3/

Fand, <sup>or Find</sup> sometimes called Abū Zaid, was a freeman of 'Ā'isha the daughter of Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās. He was a man of debauched character, although a fine musician. His remissness passed into <sup>the</sup> proverb "More delaying than Fand". I/ He lived to take part in a famous musical event, the Jamīla pilgrimage. 2/

X/ Al-Isfahānī, v, 161-4.

3/ Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 189. Al-Isfahānī, vii, 135. Cf. <sup>Fand</sup> mentioned by Von Hammer, Lit. der Arab., ii, 705. This Fand and the preceding Qand appear to be identical.

I/ Freytag, Arab. Prov., II, 159. III, 81.

2/ Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 60-i. vii, 135.

Qand /



Al-Dalāl Nāfidh<sup>A</sup> Abū Zaid belonged to Al-Medīna and was a freeman of the Banū Fāhm. He was in the service of 'A'isha the daughter of Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās. Khalīf 'Abd al-Malik (685) favoured him, for he was a fine musician, and a pupil of Tuwais. He, like his master, was a mukhannath, and is pilloried by Al-Maidānī in the proverb, - "More effeminate than Dalāl". His melodies were imitated a century<sup>later</sup> by one of the most famous of all the Arab musicians, Ibrahīm al-Mausilī.<sup>M</sup>

Budaiḥ al-Malīḥ was a ~~united~~ freeman of 'Abdallāh ibn Ja'far (d. 699) together with Nāfi' al-Khair, ~~united~~ and Nauma al-Dauhā. All <sup>of these musicians</sup> ~~united~~ took part in the Jamīla pilgrimage. Nauma was a pupil of Tuwais, and ~~united~~ Nāfi' was at the courts.

In Al-'Irāq were some lesser known musicians, - Zaid ibn al-Talīs, Zaid ibn Ka'b, Mālik ibn Ḥamama<sup>E</sup> and ~~united~~

of Mu'āwiya I (660) and Yazīd I (680).

+ Sa Hammer Las Nāgid

A. Written Al-Dallāl by Kosegarten, De Meynard, & Freytag. Cf. Lane, Lexicon, sub kharāthā. The Sāsī edition of the Kitāb al-aghānī has Nāfid, 187.

M. Al-Isfahānī, iv, 59-73. vii, 137. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, Freytag, Arab. Prov., vii, 96.

S. Al-Isfahānī, vii, 103, 104, 105. xiv, 9-11. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ~~united~~ iii, 186.

E. Al-Isfahānī, ii, 125.



CHAPTER IV.

The Umayyads.

(661-750)

"There is no true joy but lending ear to music".

Khalif Al-Walīd II (743-4).

.....

On the death of 'Alī, the Khalifate fell to the house of Umayya, in the person of Mu'āwiyā (661). Although the Umayyads ruled for nearly a century, the stricter Muslims looked upon them as usurpers, not merely because they came of the Pagan aristocracy of "unbelieving Mecca" that had withstood the Prophet, but because of their worldly ways. Yet it was under this dynasty that the Arabian empire and Muslim civilisation entered upon <sup>a</sup> ~~new~~ path of glory. The Khalifate extended its dominions eastward as far as the Oxus and Indus, and westward as far as Tunis (Carthage), whilst northward it had touched the Black Sea. Indeed, it has been well said, that where the Orthodox Khalifs had made Islām a religion, the Umayyads created it an empire. 0/

The removal of the capital from Al-Medīna to Damascus, where it remained for practically the ~~entire~~ whole of the Umayyad period, was not an auspicious event politically, although culturally, it made for progress. The wider influence brought to intellectual life by closer contact with Byzantium and Persia, lifted the people beyond the narrow confines of Islām, and the insularity of Arabia. The circumstance eventually re-acted on European culture generally, for the Arabs, <sup>being</sup> ~~becoming~~ masters of almost half the then-known civilised world, became the pioneers of that regeneration of culture which led to the Renaissance.

0/ Jurjī Zaidān, 74.

A/ Nicholson, Risālat al-Ghufrān (J.R.A.S. 1902), and Lit. Hist. of the Arabs, 206.



(I)

Mu'āwīya (661) was a ruler of literary and artistic tastes.<sup>I/</sup> "He assembled at his court all who were most distinguished by scientific acquirements; he surrounded himself with poets; and as he had subjected to his dominion many of the Grecian isles and provinces, the sciences of Greece first began, under him, to obtain an influence over the Arabs".<sup>2/</sup> Yet although the khalif was susceptible to the charms of poetry, and his badawī wife Maisūn, was an accomplished poetess, he appears to have been influenced by the conventional ban against artistic music.<sup>0/</sup> His governors frequently interfered with professional musicians, and we know that when 'Abdallāh ibn Ja'far wished to introduce a <sup>certain</sup> musician to court, he had to plead that the latter was a "poet", because the Khalif pretended that he had no idea of music and had never admitted a musician to his presence.<sup>W/</sup> Yet the Khalif was pleased with the performance of the "poet" introduced by 'Abdallāh ibn Ja'far, ~~musical~~ Sā'ib Khāthir, a well known professional musician, who did not deliver "poetry", but sang! Towards the end of his reign, Mu'āwīya heard this musician sing in Al-Medīna, and rewarded him with a present.

Yazīd I (680) was the son of ~~Maisūn~~ Maisūn, & it is no wonder that he had such inordinate tastes for poetry and music. He was himself a poet of no mean order,<sup>A/</sup>

I/ Al-Mas'ūdī, v, 77.

2/ Sismondi, i, 50.

0/ Al-Ṭabarī, ii, 214. There was music of a kind at court, such as the singing-girls provided. This we know from the pathetic song of the Khalif's wife Maisūn, who longed for the desert tent instead of the gilded court,-

"The wind's voice where the hill-path went  
Was more than tambourine can be".

(Quoted by Nicholson).

W/ Cf. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī, i, 318: iii, 238.

A/ Lammens, iii, 193.

as he happened to be



and Al-Mas'ūdī says that he was "appassioned for music (tarab)", <sup>3/</sup> whilst Al-Isfahānī informs us that he was "the first to introduce musical instruments (malāhī) and singers into the court". <sup>4/</sup> The strict Muslims were scandalized at the "ungodliness of the court, - wine and music, singing-men and singing-women, cockfighting and hounds". <sup>2/</sup>

Mu'āwīya II (683) and Marwān (684) only occupied the throne for a year, too brief a space to have any appreciable influence on the culture of the period. The latter however, drove all the mukhannathūn out of Al-Medīna when he was its governor, including the famous Tuwais.

'Abd al-Malik (685) gave general encouragement to music and letters. He was "a composer of no mean ~~was~~ merit", and "encouraged poets with a princely liberality". <sup>I/</sup> Both Ibn Misjah and Budaih al-Malīh, the best known musicians of the day, were patronised by him. At the same time, so as to show some appearance of "orthodoxy", he appears to have pretended not only to be ignorant of the art of music, but to disapprove of it. Before his courtiers, he censured music as "debasement to manliness, and ruinous to dignity and honour", but was well answered by 'Abdallāh ibn Ja'far. <sup>S/</sup> Again, in the Halbat al-kumait, it is said that 'Abd al-Malik once simulated acquaintance with the purpose of the lute ('ūd), but a freely-spoken courtier answered that everyone present was fully informed ~~was~~ about the instrument, and no one more so than the Khalīf himself, at which sally, 'Abd al-Malik was much amused. From the Kitāb al-aghānī we know that the khalīf was sufficiently well acquainted with music as to be able to

<sup>3/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, v, 156.

<sup>2/</sup> Muir, Caliphate, 314.

<sup>4/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 70. Lammens, iii, 272.

<sup>I/</sup> Muir, Caliphate, 344. Al-Mas'ūdī, v, 310.

<sup>S/</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 198.



ask for the hudā', the ghinā' al-rukḥān, and the ghinā' al-mutqan. The khalif's brother, Bishr ibn Marwān, was a patron of music.

Al-Walīd I (705) reigned during a most eventful period. The banner of Islām was <sup>n</sup>plated within the confines of China in the east, and on the shores of the Atlantic in the west. The Mediterranean was crossed, and the foundations of a western khalifate were laid in Spain. "In his reign" says Muir, "culture and the arts began to flourish".<sup>3/</sup> The cultivation of music, in spite of the high-handed measures of some of his governors, progressed by leaps and bounds. The chief musicians of Mecca and Al-Medīna, - Ibn Suraij and Ma'bad, were summoned to the court at Damascus, where they were received with <sup>even</sup>greater appreciation than the poets. The khalif's favourite musician was Abū Kāmil al-Ghuzayyīl, who, he declared, was indispensable to him.<sup>4/</sup>

Sulaimān (715) was a man of pleasure. Music was, for him, not an art to be sought for itself alone, but <sup>as</sup>a mere concomitant with the joys of the feast or the harīm. The singing-girls alone had his attention.<sup>M/</sup> When he was a prince however, he had shown some predelection for musical art, since he was keen enough to offer a prize for competition among the musicians of Mecca, and this during a pilgrimage! The first prize of 10,000 pieces of silver was carried off by Ibn Suraij, whilst a like amount was distributed among other competitors.<sup>5/</sup>

<sup>3/</sup> Muir, Umayyad Caliphate, 361.

<sup>4/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vi, 144.

<sup>M/</sup> Cf. Al-Isfahānī, iv, 60-2.

<sup>5/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, i, 126.



‘Umar II (717) brought a change to the Khalifate. He was pious, and ~~was~~ "poets, orators, and such like soon found that his court was no place for them, while it was thronged by godly and devout divines."<sup>2/</sup> Compared with his predecessors, it became a proverbial expression among the Arabs, that whilst Al-Walīd I was for art, and Sulaimān was for women, ‘Umar II was for piety.<sup>3/</sup> Yet before he came to the throne, he was not only fond of music, but was actually a composer. Al-Isfahānī claims that he was the first Khalif who compose<sup>d</sup> songs, and he gives the~~s~~ words and the "modes" of these songs.<sup>I/</sup> This was when ‘Umar was governor of Al-Hijāz. When he became Khalif however, listening to music was forbidden. It came to his notice that a judge (qādī) of Al-Medīna had become a veritable slave to the music of one of his singing-girls, and the Khalif, who had decided to dismiss him from office, sent for both the judge and the singing-girl. When they arrived at court, the latter was commanded to sing, and the Khalif was so overcome by the charm of her voice and the moving sentiment of her song, that his tears flowed. Turning to the judge he said, - "Thy crime is nothing. Return to thy post, and may Allāh guide thee".<sup>X/</sup>

Yazīd II (720) brought back music and poetry to the court and public life, although he seems to have gone to the other extreme. Like his uncle Yazīd I, he was a man "without religion", say the annalists, and he cultivated music and song on every hand. Ibn Suraij, Ma‘bad, Mālik, Ibn ‘A‘isha, Al-Baihaq al-Anṣārī, Ibn Abī Lahb, & others~~aa~~.

<sup>2/</sup> Muir, Caliphate, 369.

<sup>3/</sup> Al-Fakhrī, 178.

<sup>I/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 149-50.

<sup>X/</sup> Al-Mas‘ūdī, v, 428.



musicians, were treated with generous bounty at his court. Here too, we see the lavish favours bestowed on the singing-girls Sallāma al-Qass and Habbāba, who played important rôles in political as well as musical affairs. Yazīd was utterly free from religious prejudices. The singer Ibn Abī Lahb who had pleased the khalif one day, was asked who had taught him to sing and the musician replied, - "My father". Yazīd <sup>said</sup> ~~manipulated~~, - "If you had received no other heritage than this song, your father left you a considerable fortune". "But", urged the singer, - "My father was an infidel and an enemy of the Prophet all his life". "I know" said Yazīd, "but he was such an excellent musician that I have a certain sympathy for him". <sup>I/</sup> Some of this Khalif's verses have been preserved. <sup>2/</sup>

Hishām (724) had a prosperous reign, and <sup>it</sup> ~~him~~ was "one of the most exemplary of the Khalifate either before or after", says Muir. <sup>3/</sup> Of his attitude towards music during his occupancy of the throne, we get no information from Al-Isfahānī, although we know that he had musicians at court. Whilst he was a prince, he patronized the doyen of the musicians of Al-'Irāq, Hunain al-Hīrī, during a pilgrimage even, <sup>4/</sup> which would lead one to believe that he was not in agreement with the conventional proscription. <sup>5/</sup>

Bar Hebraeus tells us that Hishām once admitted that he did not know the difference between a pandore (tunbūr) and a lute (parbat), but this story <sup>probably</sup> belongs to the same class as those told of the other Khalifs. <sup>X/</sup>

I/ Al-Mas'ūdī, v, 449.

2/ Al-Isfahānī, xiii, 161.

3/ Muir, Caliphate, 399. He abstained from wine (nabīd).

4/ Al-Isfahānī, ii, 121.

5/ His reproof of Ibn 'A'isha for singing (Al-Isfahānī, xiii, 127) was only because it interfered with the progress of a caravan. Similarly, his punishment of Yūnis al-Kātib, was not on account of music, but because the words of his songs libelled a lady.

X/ Bar Hebraeus, 207.



Al-Walīd II (743) cared little for political life, and it is from his reign that the fortunes of the House of Umayya ~~was~~<sup>began</sup> to wane. Like Yazīd I, Al-Walīd I, and Yazīd II, this Khalif was absorbed in pleasure, and ~~an~~<sup>was</sup> open-handed patron of the arts. Al-Mas'ūdī says, - "He loved music (ghina') and was the first to support musicians from abroad, showing publicly his pleasure in the wine-cup, the revels (malāhī) and the stringed instrument ('azf). . . . . The cultivation of music spread not only among the leisured class but with the people also, whilst the singing-girls became the rage". 2/

At his court, musicians from all parts were welcomed with open arms, and among them, - ~~among~~ Ma'bad, 'Atarrad, Mālik, Ibn 'Ā'isha, Dahmān (al-Ashqar<sup>?</sup>), 'Umar al-Wādī, Hakam al-Wādī, Yūnis al-Kātib, Al-Hudhalī, Al-Abjar, Ash'ab ibn Jabīr, Abū Kāmil al-Ghuzayyil, and Yahyā Qail. The Khalif himself was a born artiste, and excelled in both music and poetry, as we know from the Kitāb al-aghānī, where a chapter is devoted to his accomplishments in these arts. Besides being an excellent singer, and a performer on the lute ('ūd) and the drum (tabl), ~~he~~<sup>he</sup> was a composer. 3/

Unfortunately, he plunged into excesses, and this "alienated from him the regard of all the better classes". 4/ This gave the 'Abbāsīd faction, the enemy of the House of Umayya, the opportunity to further their insidious propaganda against the "ungodly usurpers", as they termed the Umayyads. The reign of Al-Walīd II was short, but ~~was~~<sup>a great deal</sup> done for music during that time, ~~was~~ ~~done~~. "The love of music" says Sayyid Amīr 'Alī, "grew almost into a craze, and enormous

3/ Al-Isfahānī, viii, 161-2.

2/ Al-Mas'ūdī, vi, 4.

4/ Muir, Caliphate, 403.



sums were spent on famous singers and musicians".<sup>I/</sup>

Yazīd III (744) reigned only six months. He appears to have been equally favourable towards music, and he instructed his governor of Khurāsān, Nasr ibn Sayyār, to furnish him with "every kind of musical instrument", as well as a number of singing-girls.<sup>2/</sup> On the other hand, Al-Ghazālī hands down a saying attributed to this Khalif, which bespeaks his "orthodoxy" on the question of music. ~~Yazīd III~~ <sup>Yazīd III</sup> is credited with the words, - "Beware of singing for it maketh modesty to be lacking and increaseth lust and ruineth manly virtue; and verily it takes the place of wine and does what drunkenness does; and if ye cannot avoid having to do with it, keep it out of the way of women, for singing incites to fornication".<sup>M/</sup>

Marwān II (744-50) was the last of the Umayyad Khalifs in the East. The whole of his reign was taken up with internecine strife, which enabled the 'Abbāsids, whose seat was in Khurāsān, to raise the standard of revolt. On the 25th January, 750, the famous battle of the Zāb was fought. It sealed the fate of the Umayyads, and culminated in the death of Marwān II. It was the ~~end~~ <sup>end</sup> too, of the purely Arabian features in the national music, which, in spite of ~~musical~~ Byzantine and Persian influences, seems to have held its own during the Umayyad period. For a continuance of the older art, we have to turn to the West, where a scion of the Umayyad house was ~~musical~~ to raise a Khalifate of the West in Andalus.

Sultanate and

I/ Ameer Syed Ali, Short Hist.,

2/ Muir, Caliphate, 406.

M/ Al-Ghazālī, 248-9.



(2)

The indifference of the Umayyads towards Islām, augured well for ~~the~~ musical art. The new khalifs represented the old Pagan ideas of Arabia, and so far as they had any religio<sup>n</sup> says Muir, they "were Unitarians, and so might be called Muslims; but in the matter of drinking wine and most other things, they set Islām at naught".<sup>I/</sup> Among the "other things" was music, and, indeed, the Muslim purists do not forget to include music among the "sins" of the Umayyads. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d.728), a contemporary theologian, said concerning Mu'āwiyā I, the least unorthodox of the Umayyads, save 'Umar II, that he deserved damnation on four points, one of them being that he had left the khalifate to Yazīd I, - who was "a wine drinker, a player of the pandore (tunbūr), and a wearer of silken garments".<sup>X/</sup> Yet we need give credit to but a tithe of the stories about the profligacy of the Umayyads, since the 'Abbāsīd hatred of this dynasty, accounts for <sup>n</sup>may a canard.

With the exception of the reigns of Mu'āwiyā I, 'Abd al-Malik, and 'Umar II, the courts were thronged with musicians both male & female, and the greatest encouragement was given to the art. The honours showered upon singers and instrumentalists, and the largesses bestowed, can only be equalled in the "Golden Age" of the 'Abbāsīds. The Umayyads however, had political as well as artistic reasons for these favours. It was the singer (mughannī) who, by setting the panegyrics and satires of the court poets to music, reached the ear of the populace.<sup>M/</sup> As Lammens says, the singer and the poet were the journalists

I/ Muir, Caliphate, 431. Nicholson (Lit. Hist.) ) says, - "They had little enough religion of any sort". For their contempt of the Qur'ān and the Holy places, see Jurjī Zaidān, 102.

X/ Al-Ṭabarī, ii, 146

M/ Al-Iṣfahānī, ii, 153.



of their day.<sup>L/</sup> A poet like Jarīr, might look down on the singer, as he does in his ~~mutu~~ Naqā'id, but it was readily acknowledged that a poem set to music had greater potency than when it was delivered by a mere reciter (rāwī).<sup>W/</sup> Singers, journeying from town to town, from tribe to tribe, passed on their songs, which were taken up even by the singers in the caravans.<sup>X/</sup> All this helped to consolidate the body politic, as well as ~~the~~ the art.

Music and musicians had won back, to some extent, their places of esteem and honour, in the social life of the Arabs. Music, however, was no more an avocation for mere slaves, for we find freemen (mawālī) of good social standing and possession, making music their profession. Yūnis al-Kātib, an official in the city administration of Al-Medīna, took up this vocation. We also see a musician named Burdān being appointed to a lucrative municipal post.<sup>X/</sup> Even whilst it must be admitted that most of the professionals came from the freemen class, for the most part Persians by extraction, yet there were Arabs of noble birth like Mālik, who did not think it beneath their dignity to be professional musicians.<sup>H/</sup>

~~the population, and the~~  
~~generally applied to the~~  
~~if they entered the~~  
~~though they called them~~  
~~to the Arab family~~  
~~the~~  
~~the~~  
~~This was not due to any official~~  
~~in Persia under the~~

<sup>L/</sup> Lammens, ii, 146.

<sup>W/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, iii, 124.

<sup>X/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, ii, 153.

<sup>X/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vii, 168.



Musicians formed a class apart. This was due not to any official measure such as that which operated in Persia under the Sāsānids,<sup>W</sup> but ~~merely~~<sup>was</sup> on account of the ban of Islām. At first looked upon as vagabonds like the mediaeval minstrels of Europe, musicians were naturally forced into a separate class, which assumed something of the nature of a brotherhood, just as in Europe they were compelled to form guilds. The leading musicians appear to have made rather comfortable livings. They were in constant demand at court, the houses of the nobility and the rich bourgeoisie, as well as at the innumerable festivities connected with Islām and social life.<sup>V</sup> Some of the virtuosi turned their residences into conservatories of music, where the rich dilettanti spent their leisure hours, and where they sent their singing-girls to be trained, for no house could be without its singing-girl<sup>X</sup>.

The custom of audition at this period is of considerable interest. At the khalifate court, whilst the Khalif observed the Sāsānid custom,<sup>B</sup> of having a thin curtain between the musician and himself during a performance, this does not appear to have been always the case, except ~~when~~ when the ladies of the harīm were with him. Even then, <sup>e</sup>~~instances~~ are given where the curtain was raised.<sup>X</sup> There were occasions, indeed, when the musician performed face to face with his audience, and on one occasion, even occupied the same couch as the Khalif.<sup>W</sup> Outside the court, the ~~musician~~ musician was under no such restriction. Of

<sup>W</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, ii, 157.

<sup>I</sup> The "presents" (mentioned so often in the Kitāb al-aghānī) bestowed on musicians, are possibly exaggerated in some instances, but we must remember the Arabic proverb, "Singing without silver is like a corpse without perfume". Burckhardt, Prov., 464.

<sup>B</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, ii, 158.

<sup>X</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, iii, 99.

<sup>W</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, i, 117.



course, the singing-girls, both at court and in private households, did not usually entertain guests without the customary curtain, although we read of some strange anomalies in this respect. For instance, the famous songstress Jamīla, prepared a fête for 'Abdallāh ibn Ja'far and his entourage, in which the singing-girls, who were studying at her house, took a prominent part. The latter were gaily attired, and they performed without any curtain, in full view of the audience.<sup>3/</sup> On the other hand, at her famous fête during the pilgrimage which the Kitāb al-aghānī makes so much of, we read that the singing girls performed behind a curtain.<sup>4/</sup> Again, in the house of 'Ā'isha bint Talha, we find the songstress 'Azza al-Mailā' singing to the wives of the Quraish nobles, the whole of them being hidden from the men by a curtain.<sup>5/</sup> Yet, on another occasion we find Ibn Suraij and 'Azza al-Mailā' singing together before a company quite openly. This was at the house of Sukaina bint Al-Husain.<sup>6/</sup>

Perhaps the greatest musical advantage of the Umayyad period, was gained on the theoretical or scientific side. According to Al-Mas'ūdī, it was not until the reign of Yazīd I (680-83) that music began to be seriously cultivated in Mecca and Al-Medīna.<sup>7/</sup> This might very well be true of Mecca, but certainly not of Al-Medīna and elsewhere. Mecca, since the departure of the Umayyads for Syria, had fallen into strict orthodoxy, whilst Al-Medīna, ~~which~~ possessed a more healthy secular outlook.<sup>8/</sup> Mecca, at any rate, was later in its musical revival than Al-Medīna.

<sup>3/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vii, 144.

<sup>4/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vii, 135.

<sup>5/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, x, 55.

<sup>6/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xv, 131-2. See Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 198, where instances are given of singing-girls performing openly before guests.

<sup>7/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, v, 157. Jurjī Zaidān, 139, repeats this assertion.

<sup>8/</sup> Cf. the opinion of Ibn al-Kirriya (Ibn Khallikān, i, 239).







of certainty. All that we know is that the system of the Arabs of Al-Hijāz was different from the Persian and Byzantine systems. We get this information in the life of ~~Umar~~ Ibn Misjah already <sup>mentioned.</sup> ~~mentioned.~~ This musician, we are told, was responsible for grafting sundry "foreign" musical ideas upon the native Arab practice. Here is the passage from the Kitāb al-aghānī,--

"In Syria, he (Ibn Misjah) learned the melodies (alḥān) of Byzantium and received instruction from the barbiton players (barbatiyya) and the theorists (ustūkhūsiyya). He then turned to Persia, where he learned much of their song (ghinā') as well as the art of accompaniment. Returning to Al-Hijāz, he chose the most advantageous of the notes (nagham) of these countries, and rejected what was disagreeable, for instance, the intervals (nabarāt) and notes (nagham) which he found in the song of the Persians and Byzantines, which were alien to the Arabian song. And he sang (henceforth) according to this method. And he was the first to demonstrate this (method), & after this the people followed him in this".<sup>X</sup>

Strange to say, his pupil, Ibn Muharrar, is credited with a similar service to Arabian music. Like his master, he travelled in Persia and ~~Byzantium~~ Syria, where he learned the melodies (alḥān) and song (ghinā') of the Persians and Byzantines. "Then" says the author of the Kitāb al-aghānī, "he laid aside from these what he did not consider good in the notes (nagham), and by a careful mélange he composed, in this way, songs (aghānī) which were set to the poetry of the Arabs, the like of which had not been heard before".<sup>A</sup>

<sup>X</sup> Al-Isfahānī, iii, 84.

<sup>A</sup> Al-Isfahānī, i, 150.



What was actually borrowed from Persia and Byzantium we cannot be sure of. Probably the well known melodies of Bārbud known as the si lahn may have been among the new ideas introduced from Persia.<sup>A</sup> Although the Arabs had their melodic modes, melodic formulas, like the above dastanā of Bārbud, ~~undoubtedly~~ <sup>might have been</sup> a novelty to the Arabs.<sup>M</sup> It is hardly likely that they borrowed the Persian scale, as it is distinctly mentioned that their notes were alien to the Arabian song. Indeed, early in the 9th century, we have Arab ~~musicians~~ musicians being blamed for using Persian notes.<sup>2</sup> What benefit was derived from the Persian contact ~~was~~ may be sought in musical nomenclature. The word dastān is Persian for "fret", and this was borrowed by the Arabs for their finger places on the finger-board of the lute and pandore. Further, there is <sup>some slight</sup> ~~was~~ reason for believing that the Arabs altered their accordatura of the lute to the Persian method. The old Arabian accordatura of the lute was C-D-G-a, but after the new methods of Ibn Misjah were introduced, it would seem that the Persian tuning of A-D-G-c was adopted. This meant that the fourth string was now called by the Persian name of Bamm, and the first string by the Persian name of zīr, whilst the third and second strings, which had not been changed, retained their old Arabic dignity as the mathlath and mathnā.

What was gained from Byzantine theory or practice is equally uncertain. The general principles of the Byzantine theorists (ustūkhūsiyya)<sup>A</sup> could not have been

A. See my article on "The Old Persian Musical Modes" in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Jan. 1926.

M. Al-Khwārizmī, 258.

2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 190.

A. Professor Margoliouth of Oxford in his "Origins of Arabic Poetry" says ~~undoubtedly~~ "Mr. Farmer, a high authority on these matters, thinks it means the system of Aristoxenos". (p.447). My opinion was originally based on the assumption of Kosegarten (Lib. Cant., 34), but the appearance of the word in the assumed Al-Kindī Ms. here quoted, leads me to fall back on "theorists", the root being the Greek

Concerning this word



adopted entirely, since the assumed Al-Kindī Ms at Berlin (Ahlwardt, 5530, fol. 30) distinctly tells us that the theory of the Byzantine astukhusiyya was different from that of the Arabs. <sup>A/</sup> ~~Probably~~ <sup>we ought to allow that</sup> the Pythagorean system was now rigidly fixed owing to this Byzantine influence. Whilst admitting that there were alien influences at work, we must not forget <sup>(however)</sup> that this was a period of strong national feelings, when the old Pagan ideals were still gloried in. <sup>O/</sup> As Land points out, - "The Persian and Byzantine importations did not supersede the national music, but were engrafted upon an Arabic root with a character of its own". <sup>C/</sup>

The rhythmic and melodic modes now appear in a more definite form than when we saw them during the "Orthodox Khalifate". <sup>Six</sup> ~~Wuuu~~ rhythmic modes are mentioned at this period, - the thaqīl awwal, thaqīl thānī, khafīf thaqīl, hazaj, ramal, and ramal tunburī. One of these (and presumably two) <sup>was</sup> ~~were~~ invented during the Umayyad period. Ibn Muharrar is credited with the introduction of the ramal. <sup>D/</sup>

The melodic modes (asābi') were classified according to their majrā or "course", as either in the binsīr or the wustā. At first there appeared to have been six, but later two more were adopted. <sup>E/</sup> These modes were, -

1. Mutlaq fī majrā al-binsīr.
2. Sabbāba fī majrā al-binsīr.
3. Binsīr fī majrāhā.
4. Khinsīr fī majrā al-binsīr.
5. Mutlaq fī majrā al-wustā.
6. Sabbāba fī majrā al-wustā.
7. Wustā fī majrāhā.
8. Khinsīr fī majrā al-wustā.

<sup>A/</sup> See my article on "Some Musical MSS Identified" in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Jan. 1926.

<sup>O/</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ii, 258. Al-Isfahānī, xix, 153. xx, 169.

<sup>C/</sup> Land, Remarks, &c., 156.

<sup>D/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, i, 152.

<sup>E/</sup> Nos. 4 and 8.







taken by the rhythm (īqāʿ), which ~~was~~ one writer on Arabian music has termed "rhythmic harmony".<sup>A/</sup> ~~For~~ <sup>the</sup> Ibn Suraij tells us what was expected of a good performer in these days. He says, - "The best musician is he who enriches the melodies in music (by means of the ~~musical~~ gloss) and who quickens the soul; <sup>B/</sup> ~~and~~ gives proportion to the measures (awzān) and ~~is~~ emphasises the pronunciation; knows what is correct & ~~they~~ establishes the grammatical inflection (iʿrāb); gives full duration to the long notes (nagham al-tiwāl) and ~~head~~ makes proper the cutting-off of the short notes (nagham al-qisār); hits the mark in the various genres of rhythm (īqāʿ) and ~~with~~ grasps the places of the intervals (naharāt), and completes what resembles them in the beats (nuqrāt) of the accompaniment (darb)".<sup>Z/</sup>

On the instrumental side, we see a few changes. We have already noted that the Arabs ~~seem~~ had adopted the Persian accordatura of the lute. This seems to have been due to Ibn Suraij. In 684, ʿAbdallāh ibn Zubair brought Persian workers to help in the reconstruction of the Kaʿba. From these slaves Ibn Suraij borrowed the Persian lute (ʿūd fārisī), and he is said to have been "the first in Mecca to play Arabian music on it".<sup>E/</sup> The Persian lute continued to be favoured evidently, until the first half-

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A/ See my Music and Musical Instruments of the Arab, p. 45. Even at the close of the Middle Ages, England still recognized "rhythmic harmony" as we see in Trevisa's translation of Bartholomaeus de proprietatibus rerum, where it says, - "Armonya Rithmica is a sownynge melodye, and comyth of smything of stringes, and of tynkling other ryngynge of metalle. And dyverse instrumentis seruyth to this manere, armonye, as Tabour, and Tymbre, Harpe, and Sawtry, and Nakyres, and also Sistrum".

B/ Or "prolongs the breaths".

Z/ Al-Isfahānī, i, 125.

E/ Al-Isfahānī, i, 98.











One of the great musical events of the Umayyad period was of the pilgrimage of the famous songstress Jamīla, and the consequent musical fêtes. All the principal musicians, male and female, of Al-Medīna, took part in <sup>this</sup> ~~the~~ pilgrimage to Mecca, as well as the poets Al-Aḥwas, Ibn Abī 'Atīq, Abū Maḥjan Nuṣaib, and a crowd of dilettanti, together with some fifty singing-girls (ḡaynāt). The magnificence of the litters and the cortège in general, <sup>was</sup> ~~was~~ much commented on. On its arrival at Mecca, the leading musicians, and the poets 'Umar ibn Abī Rabī'a, Al-'Arjī, Ḥārith ibn Khālīd al-Makhzūmī, received it in admirable style. On the return to Al-Medīna, a series of musical fêtes were held for three days, the like of which Al-Hijāz had not hitherto enjoyed. During the first two days, performances were given either singly or by two or three together, by Jamīla, Ibn Mīsjah, Ibn Muḥarrar, Ibn Suraij, Al-Gharīd, Ma'bad, Mālik, Ibn 'Ā'isha, Nāfi' ibn Ṭunbūra, Nāfi' al-Khair, Al-Dalāl Nāfidh, Fand, Nauma al-Dauhā, Burd al-Fawād, Budaiḥ al-Malīḥ, Hibat Allāh, Raḥmat Allāh, and Al-Hudhalī.

On the third day, Jamīla assembled <sup>fifty</sup> ~~the~~ of the singing-girls with their lutes ('idān, plur. of 'ud) behind a curtain, whilst she herself, lute in hand, sang to their accompaniment. This same orchestra played for the performances of the other famous songstresses such as Sallāma al-Zarqā', 'Azza al-Mailā', Sallāma al-Qass, Ḥabbāba, Khulaida, Rabīḥa, Al-Fariha, Bulbula, Ladhḥat al-'Aish, ~~and Sa'ida~~ and Sa'ida (or Sa'da).

Although the accounts of this pilgrimage and the fêtes are based on the chronicles of a contemporary musician named Yūnis <sup>X</sup> al-Kātib, a considerable amount

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X. This undoubtedly should be Yūnus, ~~Yūnus~~ as in the Qur'ān, but with this individual I follow the pointing of Kosegarten, Lib. Cant., 17, and of text.



The elemental power of music such as produced the "influence" (ta'wīḍ, ʿaṣā, - ʿaṣā) on the state of legend has crept in. <sup>A/</sup> The pilgrimage probably took place during the reign of Al-Walīd I (705-15) or even earlier. <sup>B/</sup> ~~Charm, psychomagic, and even magic, and their place. Ja'far al-Sādiq (d. 755), the sixth Imam, taught the theory of magical numbers, which was closely connected with music. On the whole perhaps, magic and charms were discountenanced, except where they had a religious import. Poetry and song however, were known as "law'fī magic". Music as a means of exciting ecstasy in religious devotion was recognised in those days, although it was reserved for the later ṣūfī to develop it. The wonderful effect of music could not help but clothe it with a magical or mystical significance. There is a chapter in the 'Iqd al-Farīḡ concerning those who fainted or died through listening to music. Here is one account of how a man was effected. An Arab named Ṭarīfa came to a singer named Ayyūb and asked him to sing a verse of Idrīs's 'I-ḥāṣ. The musician took his lute and did so, and at the close, Ṭarīfa fell prostrate on the ground. When questioned as to what happened he said, - "By Allah! there rose up from my feet something hot, and there went down from my head something cold. These two met and collided, and I fell down between them, not knowing what my state was".~~

*Summary*

<sup>A/</sup> De Perceval, Mus. Arabes, 451.

<sup>B/</sup> The dates of 'Azza al-Maillā', Sallāma al-Qass, Habbāba, and the various poets are some guide to this. But Cf. the mention of Tuwāis (d. 710) and Ibrahim al-Maṣīlī (b. 742). Again, it could scarcely have happened during the reigns of Sulaimān (715-17) or 'Umar II (717-20).



The elemental power of music such as produced the "influence" (ta'thīr, athar, = ἡθoς) on animate things, appears to have still been recognized. Islām had banished idolatry, but superstition still held sway, and the genii (jinn), charms, phylacteries, and even magic, had their place. Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (d. 765) the sixth imām, taught the theory of magical numbers, which was closely connected with music. On the whole perhaps, magic and charms were discountenanced, except where they had a religious import. Poetry and song however, were known as "lawful magic". Music as a means of exciting ecstasy in religious devotion was recognized in these days, although it was reserved for the later sūfī to develop it. The wonderful effect of music could not help but clothe it with a magical or mystical signification. There is a chapter in the 'Iqd al-farīd concerning those who fainted or died through listening to music. Here is one account of how a man was effected. An Arab named Tarīfa came to a singer named Ayyūb and asked him to sing a verse of Imru'u'l-Qais. The musician took his lute and did so, and at the close, Tarīfa fell prostrate on the ground. When questioned as to what happened he said, - "By Allāh! there rose up from my foot something hot, and there went down from my head something cold. These two met and collided, and I fell down between them, not knowing what my state was". ~~M~~

~~system: (3) Persian music~~  
~~practical, instrumental, vocal, and dramatic.~~  
~~musicians from Persia and Arabia, passing into Al-Andalus,~~  
~~playing on the lute (qanun), pandura (santur), and other~~  
~~and pipe (pipa), led to the the Arabs adopting Persian~~

~~M~~ Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 199.







partial truth. That the Arabs adapted Persian melodies to their poetry, is generally admitted, but we read nothing about Byzantine melodies being similarly adopted. As for musical instruments, the Arabs of the "Days of Idolatry" had the ūd, tunbūr, mi'zaf, and mizmār. There is not one Byzantine musician mentioned by the annalists during the first century of the hijra, and all the musicians, save perhaps Nashīṭ, even the so-called Persian musicians (i.e. of Persian extraction) were either born or educated in Arabia. Indeed, only four musicians of importance came from beyond the confines of Al-Hijāz, and they were, - Nashīṭ the Persian, Abū Kāmil al-Ghuzayyil of Damascus, Ibn Tunbūra of Al-Yaman, and Hunain of Al-Hīra. Al-Hijāz was the conservatory of Arabian music, ~~the~~ a circumstance which scandalized the provinces. Al-'Irāq, once the home of Semitic culture, lagged behind, having fallen into the hands of the puritans of Islām, who proscribed music, although one of its greatest theologians ~~was~~ Al-Hasan al-Baṣrī (d. 728) said, - "Music (ghinā') is a good help in obedience to Allāh, and man learns through it the ties of friendship". <sup>W/</sup>

~~W/~~ Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 179.



(3)

The Khalif, apprised of this, commanded that Ibn Misjah be sent to Damascus. On his arrival at the capital, he fell

The lives of the virtuosi of the Umayyad period are full of the most interesting details of social as well as musical life, and a great deal of the material is quoted (in the Kitāb al-aghānī) on the authority of a contemporary, ~~Yunis al-Kātib~~, who was himself a musician.

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The ~~greatest~~ greatest musician of the Umayyad era was undoubtedly Ibn Misjah, <sup>I</sup> or in full, Abū 'Uthmān Sa'īd ibn Misjah (d. ca. 71<sup>5</sup>). He was born at Mecca and was a freeman of the Banū Jūsh. During the reign of Mu'āwiyah I (661-80) his master heard him singing Arabic verses to Persian melodies, and it led to his emancipation. Ibn Misjah then took it into his head to go abroad, so as to ascertain what else there was to be gained from "foreigners". This took him to Syria and Persia, as we have already mentioned, and on his return we see that new methods ~~were~~ introduced into Arabian music.

His fame spread with amazing rapidity, and during the reign of 'Abd al-Malik (684-705), his popularity aroused the indignation of the strict Muslims, who laid a charge against him before the Governor of Mecca, saying that he was seducing the "Faithful" by means of his profane art. Aa/

I/ This is the vocalisation in the Fihrist, 141, and it is followed by Guidi. Kosegarten has Musajjij (Lib. Cant., 9), and De <sup>Percival</sup> ~~Musajjij~~ writes Musajjih, (Mus. Arabes, 414).

Aa/ ~~Now~~ The pietists looked upon music as a device of the Devil to ensnare man. We read in the Raudat al-Safā, <sup>ii</sup> (1), 57, that it was jealousy of the Prophet David's voice that led the Devil to invent musical instruments, "and thereby decoyed men from the straight path, precipitating them into the valley of perdition".



The Khalif, apprised of this, commanded that Ibn Misjah be sent to Damascus. On his arrival at the capital, he fell in with the cousins of the Khalif, who, being fond of music, took him into their palace which adjoined that of the "Commander of the Faithful". Owing to the proximity, ~~at~~ the Khalif heard Ibn Misjah singing, and immediately commanded that he <sup>be</sup> ~~be~~ brought into his presence. Before the Khalif we read of him singing the hudā', the ghina' al-rukban (a form of the nash), and the ghina' al-mutqan or artistic song. He was not only pardoned by the Khalif, but was awarded a handsome present. Ibn Misjah returned to Mecca, where he lived until the reign of Al-Walīd I (705-15). We do not know the date of his death, but it appears to have been during the latter reign. ~~M~~ Ibn Misjah who has been designated "the first in the art of music", had <sup>three</sup> ~~four~~ eminent pupils, - Ibn Muharrar, Ibn Suraij, and Yunis al-Kātib. The last named considered the first two as the greatest singers of Islām. ~~O~~

Ibn Muharrar, or Abū'l-Khattāb Muslim (or Salim) ibn Muharrar (d. ca. 715) <sup>A</sup> ~~A~~ belonged to Mecca, where his father, a Persian freeman, was one of the guardians of the Ka'ba. Ibn Muharrar himself <sup>is</sup> ~~said~~ to have been a freeman of the Banū Makhzūm, and besides having been taught singing by Ibn Misjah, he had learned the art of accompaniment from 'Azza al-Mailā'. Unfortunately, he was afflicted with leprosy, and for this reason he made no appearance at court or public engagements, but led a wandering life, spending only three months of the year at Mecca, the remaining time being taken up at Al-Medīna and other towns.

He is counted, with his master Ibn Misjah, as one of

~~M~~ De <sup>Perceval</sup> ~~Perceval~~, 421.

~~in~~ in Al-Maqrizī (Leyden MS. 1062),

~~Q~~ Al-Isfahānī, iii, 84-88.

~~A~~ In both editions of the Kitāb al-aghānī, and most authorities, he is called Ibn Muhriz. On the other hand he is called Ibn Muharrar in the Diwān (i, 134) of Al-Buhturī (d. 897), which would appear to be the correct form.



the contributors to the perfecting of Arabian musical theory, as we have seen. He certainly had a considerable reputation and was ~~was~~ reputed to be "the best of men in the song (ghina')", whilst popular voice dubbed him "The <sup>harfist</sup> ~~musician~~ of the Arabs". ~~W~~ His songs were in great demand, and although he kept aloof from the public, these songs were introduced to them by a singing-girl. Two inventions stand to his credit, - the rhythmic mode called ramal, and the practice of singing the couplet (zauj). The beauty of his melody was its simplicity, and the annalists say, - "It seems as though his singing was created from the very heart of man, since every man could sing it". ~~I~~ He appears to have died about the same time as Ibn Misjah. ~~I~~

Among the four great musicians of Islām Al-Maqrīzī names Ibn Muharrar. ~~Q~~

~~M~~ That is, - "The sannāj (sanj player) of the Arabs".

Here the instrument is undoubtedly meant, not like the title given to Al-A'ṣnā the Pagan poet, who was called "The sannāja (sem) of the Arabs", meaning probably "The rhythmist (in poetry) of the Arabs".

See Lane, Lexicon, s.v., but cf. Nicholson, Lit. Hist. 123 De Perceval, Hist., ii, 396. Kitāb al-aghānī,

~~I~~ Al-Isfahānī, i, 150-52. [ Sāsī edition, i, 146.

~~O~~ Al-Maqrīzī, op. cit.



Ibn Suraij, or Abū Yahyā 'Ubaidallāh<sup>X/</sup> ~~ibn~~ Suraij (ca. 634 - 726)<sup>Q/</sup> was the son of a Turkish slave born at Mecca. He was a freeman of the Banū Naufal ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib or the Banū 'l-Hārith ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib. He had been taught music by Ibn Misjah, ~~unlike him~~ and had received instruction from Tuwais at Al-Medīna, where he also attended the concerts of 'Azza al-Mailā'.<sup>A/</sup> Returning to Mecca, he took upon <sup>him</sup> the calling of a nā'ih (singer of elegies), and we find him at the court of 'Uthmān. At this time he only sang the improvisation (murtajal) to the rhythmic accompaniment of the qadīb or rhythmic wand. Up to his fortieth year he was practically little known, but in ~~the~~ 683 he attracted attention by his elegy (nauh) on the slain at Al-Medīna of that year. Immediately, he sprang into fame, and Sukaina bint al-Husain became his patroness.

We have already noticed that about 684, Ibn Suraij took up the Persian lute, being "the first in Mecca to play Arabian music on it". This circumstance, coupled with the fact that a pupil of his named Al-gharīd, had already outshone him as ~~unlike him~~ nā'ih, led him to become an ordinary musician (mughannī). In this sphere he was equally successful, and won the prize at a competition before Sulaimān (afterwards Khalif) at Mecca. Khalif Al-Walīd I (705-15) invited him to the court at Damascus, where the musician was lodged in a splendid pavilion, and loaded with honours. On his return to Mecca however, he found that the new governor, Nāfi' ibn 'Alqama, had forbidden music and wine in the city, yet so great was the prestige of Ibn Suraij, that the ordinance was relaxed in his favour.

(iii, 187.)

Al. Al-Isfahānī, ii, 174; iii, 84; xvi, 14. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi,

XA. Cf. Kosegarten, Lib. Sant., 12. De <sup>Perceval</sup> ~~Mus. Arab.~~, Mus. Arab., 457

Q. He could scarcely have ~~lived until~~ <sup>(lived until)</sup> Khalif Al-Hādī (785-6) as Al-Isfahānī suggests (vi, 67).



Yūnis al-Kātib names Ibn Suraij as the first of the "four great singers" of Islām. Hishām ibn Mirya said,—"After the Prophet David, Allāh created no musician comparable with Ibn Suraij". He was considered the supreme exponent of the ramal rhythmic mode, whilst his famous "Seven Songs" rivalled those of Ma'bad.<sup>1/</sup>

Al-Gharīd (d. ca. 715-24) was the nickname (meaning "the good singer")<sup>2/</sup> of Abu Yazīd<sup>3/</sup> (or Abu Marwān) 'Abd al-Malik, who belonged to a Barbary family of slaves. He was a freeman of the famous sisters known as the 'Abalāt, but passed into the hands of Sukaina bint al-Husain, who had him trained as a nā'ih by Ibn Suraij. He then persevered with the song proper (ghina') and soon became a serious rival to his teacher. We then find him at the court of Al-Walīd I (705-15) at Damascus, and we read of him accompanying himself with the qadīb, duff, or 'ūd.

When the Governor of Mecca, Nāfi' ibn 'Alqama, issued his decree against music and wine, Al-Gharīd was compelled to seek refuge in Al-Yaman, where he is said to have died during the reign of Sulaimān (715-17). In another account however, he is mentioned at the court of Yazīd II (720-24).<sup>4/</sup> According to Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, Al-Gharīd died at a festive gathering in the bosom of his family. He had just finished singing to them, when "the jinn (genii) twisted his neck and he died!"<sup>5/</sup> Yūnis al-Kātib & Hunain al-Hīrī claim that Al-Gharīd was one of the "four great singers" of Islām.<sup>6/</sup>

1/ Al-Isfahānī, I, 97-129.

2/ Kosegarten, Lip. Cant., 14. De Perceval, Mus. Arabes., 460.

3/ Kosegarten has Abū Zaid.

4/ Al-Isfahānī, vii, 11-12. 5/ Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 187.

6/ Al-Isfahānī, ii, 128-48. Yūnis al-Kātib says that the "four great singers" were,— Ibn Suraij, Ibn Muharrar, Al-Gharīd, & Ma'bad. 'Ubaid ibn Hunain al-Hīrī says that they were,— Ibn Suraij, Al-Gharīd, Ma'bad, and Hunain al-Hīrī. Ishāq al-Mausilī says that they were,— Ibn Suraij, Ibn Muharrar, Ma'bad, and Malik. Cf. Al-Buhturī, Diwān (Edit. AH. 1300), ii, 160, 193, 218.



Ma'bad,<sup>1</sup> was a mulatto, whose full name was Abū 'Abbād Ma'bad ibn Wahb (d.743). He was a freeman of 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Qaṭan, and belonged to Al-Medīna. As a youth, he was an accountant, but having taken singing lessons from Sā'ib Khāthir, Nashīṭ, and ~~wah~~ Jamīla, he visited Syria, Persia, & Egypt, on a sort of musical pilgrimage. Returning to his native city, he soon made a name, and at the time of 'Abd al-Malik (685-705) he carried off first prize at a tournament of song organised by Ibn Safwān, a noble of the Quraish. He sang at the courts of Al-Walīd I (705-15), Yazīd II (720-24), and Al-Walīd II (743-44). Yazīd II treated Ma'bad with unheard-of favours. He said to Ma'bad one day, that he had noticed in his compositions a certain strength (matāna) and solidity, which did not exist in those of Ibn Suraij, whose works appeared to him to be more pliable (inhinā')<sup>2</sup> and tender (layyin). To this Ma'bad replied, - "Ibn Suraij cultivates a light (khafīf) style, whilst I adopt a grandiose (kāmil tāmm) mode. He moves towards the East, and I towards the West".<sup>3</sup> Upon the death of Ibn Suraij (ca.726) Ma'bad became the leading singer, and when Al-Walīd II was called to the throne (743), the aged Ma'bad was invited to the court at Damascus. Here he was received with honour, and a gift of 12,000 pieces of gold! He was commanded to attend the court shortly after, but he was ill when he arrived, and paralysis intervened, and although he was lodged in the palace itself, with every possible attention paid him, he died. At his funeral, the Khalif and his brother Al-Ghamr, dressed in simple tunics, walked in front of the pier, whilst the renowned songstress Sallāma al-Qāss, (*Isabel Burton's Edit.*)

<sup>1</sup> Burton, Arabian Nights, iii, 252, writes Ma'abid.

<sup>2</sup> ~~cf.~~ De Pérceval, Mus. Arabes, 488.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Isfahānī, i, 116.



one of Ma'bad's pupils, chanted one of his elegies. Ishāq al-Mausilī said, - "Ma'bad was a consummate singer, and his compositions reveal a talent superior to all his rivals". A poet of Al-Medīna said, -

"Tuwais, and after him, Ibn Suraij, were masters,  
But it is Ma'bad who deserves the premier rank."

Poets like Al-Buhturī and Abū Tammām knew the worth of Ma'bad in Arabian music.<sup>1/</sup> Among his famous songs were those known as the "Seven Fortresses" or "Seven Cities",<sup>2/</sup> whilst five others were celebrated as the Ma'badāt.<sup>3/</sup> Among his pupils were, - Ibn 'Ā'isha, Mālik, Sallāma al-Qass, Ḥabbāba, Yūnis al-Kātib, and Siyyat.<sup>4/</sup>

Ibn 'Ā'isha, or more properly, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn 'Ā'isha (d. ca. 743), belonged to Al-Medīna, and was the son of 'Ā'isha (his father's name being unknown) a female hairdresser in the service of Al-Kathīr ibn al-Ṣalt al-Kindī. In music, Ma'bad and Jamīla were his teachers, and he possessed a voice of extraordinary quality. We read of his musical abilities as early as 'Abd al-Malik (685-705).<sup>5/</sup> At the courts of Yazīd (720-24) and Al-Walīd (743-44) he created a deep impression. Indeed, the former was so completely ravished by the music of Ibn 'Ā'isha, that he gave vent to exclamations, in his ecstasy, that were deemed impious.<sup>1/</sup> At Al-Walīd's court, he was wine-bibbing one evening with the Khalif's brother Al-Ghamr on a balcony, when <sup>they</sup> ~~he~~ quarrelled. A struggle ensued, and the musician was thrown or fell over the balcony and was killed. This is said to have been about 743.<sup>6/</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī says of Ibn 'Ā'isha, -

<sup>1/</sup> Al-Buhturī, Diwān, ii, 160, 193, 218. Abū Tammām, Diwān (Bairūt Edit.), 103.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, viii, 91. <sup>3/</sup> Ibn Khallikān, ii, 374.

<sup>4/</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, i, 19-29. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 187.

<sup>5/</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, xviii, 127. <sup>6/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, vi, 9-10.

<sup>6/</sup> Cf. Al-Iṣfahānī, v, 17, 54 viii, 86.



(and a highly esteemed author.)

"He was the best of mankind in singing", whilst his brilliant style gave rise to the saying, - "Like the beginning of a song of Ibn 'Ā'isha". During his recitals, he would preface ~~the~~ the performance<sup>2</sup> with an explanatory lecture on the poetry of his song<sup>1</sup>, the music, and its composer.<sup>1/</sup>

Yūnis al-Kātib, or Yūnis ibn Sulaimān (d. ca. 765), was a freeman of 'Amr ibn al-Zubair. He was the son of a lawyer of Persian origin, and was brought up in Al-Medīna, where he became an official in the municipal service, hence his surname al-Kātib ("~~the~~<sup>secretary, or</sup>scribe"). At first, music was merely a pastime, but after studying under Ibn Muharrar, Ibn Suraij, Al-Gharīd, and Muḥammad ibn 'Abbād al-Kātib,<sup>2/</sup> he became a good all-round musician, even so proficient as to arouse the jealousy of Ibn 'Ā'isha. During the reign of Hishām (724-43) he was patronised by the Khalif's nephew, afterwards Al-Walīd II.<sup>3/</sup> Unfortunately he got into trouble with the "authorities", by reason of having set to music some verses about a young lady of noble birth named Zainab, which had become popular as the Zayānib. The lady's family were incensed at such a liberty being taken with her name, and Yūnis had to flee the country.

On the accession of Al-Walīd II (743) Yūnis returned and was invited to the khalifate court, where he remained until the death of this pleasure loving monarch in 744.

~~Nothing~~ Of Yūnis after this we have no trace, but he is believed to have lived until the middle of the reign of Al-Manṣūr (754-75).

1/ Al-Iṣfahānī, ii, 62-79. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 187. In the index to De Meynard's Prairies d'or, the singer Ibn 'Ā'isha is confused with the traditionist & others of the same name.

2/ Al-Iṣfahānī, vi, 15.

3/ The full story of this is told in the 684th Night of the Thousand & One Nights (Burton, iv, 313).



(and a highly esteemed author.)

The chief merit of Yūnis al-Kātib was on the literary side, since he was quite a good poet, <sup>I.</sup> His books on music are mentioned in the Fihrist as follows, - a Kitāb al-naghām (Book of Melodies), <sup>2.</sup> a Kitāb al-qiṣṣ (Book of Singing-Girls).

~~~~~~~~~ The first-named, says Al-Isfahānī, was the "first collection of music (ghinā')", that is to say, the first attempt to collect Arabian songs, together with information about their melodies, modes, authors, and composers. Among the pupils of Yūnis were, - Siyyaṭ and Ibrahīm al-Mausilī. <sup>3.</sup>

Mālik was an Arab of the Banū Ṭāi', whose full name was Abū Walīd Mālik ibn Abī'l-Samh Jābir (d.ca.754). He was born in the mountain home of the tribe, his father belonging to the Banū Thu'l, a branch of the Ṭāi', whilst his mother was of the Banū Makhzūm, and so belonged to the Quraish. Mālik could thus <sup>almost</sup> claim to be of noble birth, but his family were poor, and young Mālik was adopted by the famous art patron 'Abdallāh ibn Ja'far. One day, Mālik heard the famous <sup>Ma'bad</sup> sing at the palace of Ḥamza ibn 'Abdallāh ibn al-Zubair in 684, and became so enraptured that he asked leave to take lessons in singing. He soon astonished people by being able to sing the songs of Ma'bad note for note, and was immediately favoured by the court and nobility. <sup>A.</sup> In company with Ma'bad and Ibn 'Ā'isha, he appeared before Yazīd II (720-24) <sup>X.</sup> and Al-Walīd II (743-44), the latter making verses upon him. <sup>W.</sup>

He attached himself to one of the Hāshimī family of Sulaimān ibn 'Alī, and on the accession of the 'Abbāsids to the Khalifate in 750, when Sulaimān became Governor of

I. Brockelmann, i, 49

2. Al-Fihrist, i, 143.

3. Al-Isfahānī, vi, 7.

A. De Perceval says that Mālik did not appear at the Umayyad court because of his Hāshimite leanings. Mus. Arabes, 499

X. Al-Isfahānī, i v, 171.

W. Al-Isfahānī, ii, 65, 166: x, 170.



the Lower Tigris, Mālik accompanied him to his seat at Basra. After a short stay however, he returned to Al-Medīna where he died about 754 at the advanced age of eighty. <sup>A/</sup>

Mālik was recognized as an artiste of the first rank, at any rate as a singer, <sup>B/</sup> as he did not play the lute (ūd). <sup>C/</sup>

ʿAtarrad, Abū Hārūn (d. ca. 786) was a freeman of the Anṣār and a pupil of Maʿbad. He was held in high esteem at Al-Medīna by reason of his legal erudition as well as his music. He was "pre-eminently a good singer and possessed a fine voice". We read of him in connection with the best families in Al-Medīna, including Sulaimān ibn ʿAlī. When Al-Walīd was Khalīf (743-44), he was called to the court at Damascus, where his music so affected the Khalīf that he tore his robes in twain in his excitement. ʿAtarrad was rewarded with a thousand pieces of gold, the Khalīf saying, "When you return to Al-Medīna you may feel inclined to say, - 'I have sung before the Commander of the Faithful and so entranced him that he tore his garments', but by Allāh, if a word escapes your lips of what you have seen, you will lose your head". <sup>A/</sup> ʿAtarrad lived as late as the reign of Al-Mahdī (755) and perhaps even into that of Hārūn (786). <sup>S/</sup>

<sup>A/</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, iv, 168-75). <sup>B/</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, i, 98, 151.

<sup>C/</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi, iii, 187. At first he only sang the "improvisation" (murtajal), and we are told that Maʿbad had to rectify his songs for him.

<sup>A/</sup> A similar story is told of Maʿbad. A Khalīf said to him, - "If you wish to continue to receive the favours of kings, guard their secrets".

<sup>S/</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, iii, 96-9.



Among the famous songstresses of the Umayyad era there were ~~four~~ <sup>(Jamīla)</sup> outstanding names, — Sallāma al-Qass, Habbāba, and Sallāma al-Zarqā'.

→ Sallāma al-Qass was a singing-girl of a Quraishī noble of the Banū Zuhra named Suhail. She was a handsome half-caste of Al-Medīna, who counted among her teachers, — Jamīla, Ma'bad, Ibn 'Ā'isha, and Mālik. At the death of Suhail, she passed into the possession of his son Muṣ'ab, who sold her to Yazīd II, whilst he was a prince, for 3000 pieces of gold. Yazīd was considerably influenced by Sallāma, but when he became Khalif, he transferred his affections to another singing-girl, Habbāba. Sallāma al-Qass continued at court under successive khalifs. X/

Habbāba, the second favourite of Yazīd II, was purchased when he was a prince from <sup>(a certain)</sup> Ibn Rummāna (or Ibn Mīna) of the Banū Lāshik, for 4000 pieces of gold. This displeased his brother the khalif Sulaimān, and Yazīd had to send her back. When Yazīd ascended the throne (720) he sent for Habbāba, and she became his constant companion until ~~his~~ her death in 724. Yazīd was prostrated with grief, and for days he clung to the corpse. He never lifted his head again, and was dead within a week.

~~Her singing, which is said to have been the most beautiful of the time, was much admired by the khalif.~~ Habbāba had been taught by 'Azza al-Mailā' (?), Jamīla, Ibn Muharrar, Ibn Suraij, Ma'bad, and Mālik. 2/

X/ Al-Isfahānī, iii, 115-17. Al-Mas'ūdī, v, 446, &c.

2/ Al-Isfahānī, xiii, 154-65. Al-Mas'ūdī, v, 447, 7c.



Jamīla (d. ca. 720) was a freewoman of the Banū Sulaim, or rather the Banū Bahz, a branch of this tribe. Whilst she was with this family ~~latter~~, Sā'ib Khāthir was their neighbour, and Jamīla was clever enough to memorise the notes (<sup>a</sup>nagmāt) of his songs, and one day surprised her mistress by singing not only the songs of Sā'ib, but also a composition of her own. ~~X~~ Al-Medīna soon rang with the praises of the new singer, and she became in great demand as a teacher, when a crowd of female slaves from the various households were placed under her instruction. By this means Jamīla gained her freedom, and, having married, she established herself in a splendid house which soon became the centre of attraction for the musicians and dilettanti of Al-Medīna and Mecca. Many musicians of later fame, such as Ibn Musjah, Ibn ~~Mufarr~~ <sup>farar</sup>, Ibn Suraij, Al-Gharīd, Ma'bad, Ibn 'Ā'isha, and Mālik, as well as the poets 'Umar ibn Abī Rabi'a, Al-Ahwas, and Al-'Arjī, were frequent auditors at her concerts, and some indeed, were pupils. One of the greatest events in her career was her famous pilgrimage to Mecca, which has already been dealt with.

Although the dates of Al-Isfahānī are rather confusing we can be fairly certain that Jamīla flourished during the first half of the Umayyad period. In one place she is mentioned as having sung before 'Umar I (634-44), <sup>(W)</sup> and in another as singing the verses of Al-Ahwas before Yazīd II (720-4). Tuwais (d. 710) and Ibrahīm al-Mausilī (b. 742) are included among those who took part in her pilgrimage, which is obviously incorrect. Clearly, she did not live later than Al-Walīd I (d. 715). Jamīla held a high place in Arabian music, especially as a teacher. Ma'bad said, - "In the art of music (ghinā') Jamīla is the tree, and we are the branches". ~~W~~

(Turn back)

~~W~~. Al-Isfahānī, vii, 124-48.

~~X~~. Al-Isfahānī, vii, 188.

<sup>(W)</sup>. Al-Isfahānī, vii, 148.



Sallāma al-Zarqā' was a pupil of Jamīla, and took part in her celebrated fêtes. She came to the court of Yazīd I (680-83) and was presented to the poet Al-Ahwas ~~who~~ who had fallen in love with her. She was a celebrated beauty as well as an accomplished singer, and passed into the hands of several masters. We find her finally at the court of Yazīd II (720-24).<sup>3/</sup> Her sister Rayyā' also won some fame.<sup>M/</sup>

Abū Ḥusayn ibn al-ʿAṭṭā, a contemporary of Ibn al-ʿAṭṭā, is credited with a phenomenal voice. There is a story of its wonderful power, and how a procession of pilgrims was held up by its charm.<sup>2/</sup>

Ibn al-Fuṭayh was a musician who came from Al-Yaman, & he is classed among the most skillful executants in the ḡana repertoire.<sup>6/</sup> He may have been the son of Ḥafṣ al-Fuṭayh who belonged to the "Banū al-Ḥafṣ".

Al-Burḍān was a pupil of Ḥafṣ, and was contemporary with ʿAzza al-Mulla, Jamīla, and Ibn al-Muḥarrir. It was through him that classical musical traditions of the Ḥafṣiyya school were passed on to the virtuosi of the ʿAbbāsid court. In his old age he gave up the musical profession and became an inspector of markets in al-Madīna.

Rayyā' b. al-ʿAṭṭā was a friend of the famous Ḥafṣiyya.

<sup>3/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 89-90. If the account of Al-Isfahānī (xxi, 5) of her being at the court of Yazīd II (Cf. Guidi, 381, who says Yazīd III) is correct, she must have been about fifty years of age.

<sup>M/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 7, 9.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 128-9.

<sup>6/</sup> Ibn al-ʿAṭṭā, iii, 137.

<sup>4/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vii, 136.

<sup>5/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vii, 138-9.

<sup>7/</sup> Guidi writes <sup>11</sup>, while al-Burḍān (Arab. iii, 88) has <sup>11</sup>.  
al-Burḍān has <sup>11</sup>.

<sup>8/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, iii, 11-12 viii, 162.



Among the lesser musicians of the Umayyad period are several who deserve notice.

Muhammad ibn 'Abbād al-Kātib, a freeman of the Banū Makhzum, was one of the good singers of Al-Hijāz. He is specially mentioned by Al-Isfahānī on account of his interview with Malik ibn Anas (d. 795). He was also one of the teachers of Yūnis al-Kātib. He died at Baghdād in the reign of Al-Mahdī (775-85).<sup>1/</sup>

'Amr ibn 'Uthmān ibn /Abī'l-Kannāt, a contemporary of Ibn 'A'isha, is credited with a phenomenal voice. There is a story of its wonderful power, and how a procession of pilgrims was held up by its charm.<sup>2/</sup>

Ibn Tunbūra was a musician who came from Al-Yaman, & he is classed among the most skilful executants in the hazaj rhythmic mode.<sup>5/</sup> He may have been the son of Nāfi' al-Tunbūra who belonged to the "Orthodox Khalifate".<sup>X/</sup>

Al-Burdān was a pupil of Ma'bad, and was contemporary with 'Azza al-Mailā', Jamīla, and Ibn Muharrar. It was through him that <sup>the</sup> classical musical traditions of the Umayyad school were passed on to the virtuosi of the 'Abbāsīd court. In his old age he gave up the musical profession and became an inspector of markets in Al-Medīna.<sup>7/</sup>

Yahyā Qail<sup>M/</sup> was a freeman of the famous 'Abalāt family. He gave music lessons to Khalif Al-Walīd II (743-44) and this during a pilgrimage to Mecca, which scandalized the devout.<sup>2/</sup>

<sup>1/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vi, 15-16.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xviii, 126-8.

<sup>5/</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 187.

<sup>X/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vii, 135.

<sup>7/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vii, 168-9

<sup>M/</sup> Guidi writes Qail, whilst Huart (Arap. Lit., 58) has Fīl. Kosegarten has Qail.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, iii, 11-12 viii, 162.



'Umar al-Wādī, whose real name was 'Umar ibn Dā'ūd ibn Zādhān, was a freeman of 'Amr ibn 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān. He is said to have been a muhandis i.e. a geometrician, and must therefore have been one of the first to be acquainted with this art among the Arabs. <sup>A/</sup> As a musician he was a great favourite with Al-Walīd II (743-44) who called him, - "The joy of my life". He was singing to this artistic khalif when ~~the latter~~ <sup>the latter</sup> was assassinated. <sup>X/</sup> He is said to have been the first of the singers (? of artistic music) in Wādī al-Qurā his native place, and also to have been the teacher of Hunain al-Ḥirī. His date rather precludes these attributions, and perhaps it is his father who is meant. ~~---~~

Abū 'l-'Alā' Ash'ab ibn Jubair was another favourite of Al-Walīd II, and he once sang before this Khalif dressed in pantaloons made from the skin of an ass, much to his master's delight. He possessed not only an excellent voice but a fund of buffoonery. <sup>5/</sup>

Dahmān (al-Ashqar) <sup>?</sup> <sup>X/</sup> 'Abd al-Rahmān <sup>ibn Amr</sup> was a well-known singer who had a singing contest with Hakam al-Wādī. He is mentioned as late as Fadl ibn Yahyā the Barmakid in the late 8th century. <sup>4/</sup>

Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān Sa'īd ibn Mas'ūd, commonly called Al-Hudhalī, was a sculptor by profession, but a skillful singer as well. He found a considerable audience among the young gentry of the Quraish. He married a daughter of Ibn Suraij, who taught him her father's songs. <sup>I/</sup>

<sup>A/</sup> Unless muhandis here means "a miner".

<sup>X/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vi, 141-44.

~~~~~~~~~  
<sup>3/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xviii, 83-105.

<sup>X/</sup> Cf. Kosegarten, 21. Guidi, s.v. *Probably Dahmān ibn*

<sup>4/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, iv, 141-46. [ al-Ashqar.

<sup>I/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, iv, 152.



Al-Baidhaq al-Anṣarī sang before Yazīd II (720-24).<sup>1/</sup>  
Abū Kāmil al-Ghuzayyīl was at the court of Al-Walīd II  
(743-4) and this was the minstrel of whom the khalif said  
"When he is away, I am like one bereft".<sup>2/</sup> Another singer  
was Ibn Mush'ab of Al-Tā'if in Al-Hijāz.<sup>3/</sup> Burd al-Fawād,  
Hibat Allāh, and Rahmat Allāh took part in the Jamīla  
pilgrimage.<sup>4/</sup> Musicians of passing fame were, - Abū Tālib  
'Upaidallāh (or Muḥammad) ibn al-Qāsim better known as  
Al-Abjar,<sup>5/</sup> and 'Abdallāh ibn Muslim ibn Jundab.<sup>6/</sup>

Among the lesser female musicians, were, - Tanbī who was  
at the court of Sulaimān,<sup>7/</sup> and Umm 'Auf who belonged to  
the circle of Yazid II.<sup>8/</sup> Shuhda (or Shahda) was a  
singing-girl of Al-Walīd I (705-15), and her daughter 'Atika,  
became famous during the 'Abbāsīd régime.<sup>9/</sup> Khulaida,  
Bulbula, Ladhnaṭ al-'Aish, and Al-Fariha, were among those who  
assisted at the Jamīla fêtes.<sup>10/</sup>

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- 1/ Al-Iṣfahānī, xiii, 163.  
2/ Al-Iṣfahānī, vi, 144-46. He is called Abū Kāmil al-'Azīz  
by Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 188.  
3/ Al-Iṣfahānī, iv, 82-3.      4/ Al-Iṣfahānī, vii, 135, 139.  
5/ Al-Iṣfahānī, iii, 115-17.  
6/ Al-Iṣfahānī, v, 145.  
7/ Al-Iṣfahānī, ix, 20.  
8/ Al-Iṣfahānī, xiii, 164.  
9/ Al-Iṣfahānī, vi, 57-8.  
10/ Al-Iṣfahānī, vii, 124, 135.



## CHAPTER V.

### The 'Abbāsids.

("The Golden Age"), whilst Persian scholars and philosophers were (750-847). Indeed, there are many

features which point to a considerable domination of the

Aryan "The art of music continued to make progress with the Arabs, and under the 'Abbāsids it was carried to its perfection".

Ibn Khaldūn, Al-Muqaddima.

.....

When the House of 'Abbās rose on the ruins of the ~~Umayyad~~ Umayyad dynasty, a new era dawned for the Arabs, and the foundations of the great intellectual life of subsequent centuries were laid. The more liberal intercourse with Byzantium, and the encouragement given to the people of Persia and Khurāsān, was the main cause of this. Although Persia had been thoroughly subdued, and almost every trace of its national life effaced under the Arab domination, yet there still remained the mind of the Aryan, which became a weighty factor in the artistic, philosophical, and scientific ideas of Islāmic civilisation. Under the Umayyads, the Arabs, as we have seen, formed a sort of military aristocracy, every other pursuit being left to their freemen (mawālī). The time had now arrived however, when the Arabs, sated with conquest, power, and dominion, began to "settle down". They scorned even the best administrative positions, preferring to admit their erstwhile slaves, the Persians, to most of them. Side by side with this political decline, there was a retrogression in the purely Arabian arts and literature. Poetry especially was affected, and the number of Persian and other foreign poets who sprang up after the 'Abbāsids came into power, was considerable.



The ~~main~~ arts also became influenced. Persian costume and decoration were encouraged at court, whilst Persian scholars and philosophers were welcomed. Indeed, there are many features which point to a considerable domination of the Aryan over the Semitic spirit for a time at least.<sup>1/</sup> In music however, this influence did not reveal itself until a much later period. This was probably owing to the fact that musicians formed quite a special & distinct class of society, which, by reason of its insularity, was very narrow and conservative. In this particular, it will be noticed that nearly all the musicians of the "Golden Age" were Arabs either by birth or race, ~~and~~ <sup>came</sup> & mostly from Al-Hijāz.<sup>2/</sup>

The 'Abbāsid period that comes within our present scope falls into two cycles of culture influences, which, for the sake of historical convenience, may be divided into the "The Golden Age" (750-847), and "The First Decline" (847-945), which bring us to the period of the Buwaihids. Herein, as in previous chapters, we will first use the individual ~~individual~~ <sup>id</sup> khalifs to illustrate the determining political factors in the culture conditions. Everywhere, they form excellent "milestones", as it were, for this purpose, since all culture seems to depend on the body politic.

<sup>1/</sup> Muir, Caliphate, 465. Von Kremer, Streifzüge, 32.

Huart, Arab Lit., 64.

<sup>2/</sup> Lichtenenthal, Dizionario e bibliografia della musica, calls it "The Golden Age of Persian music with the Arabs". We cannot admit this statement at this period. Persian influence was very slight at this time. During "The First Decline", however, we see it ~~more~~ quite definitely.



## (I)

In the year 762, Al-Manṣūr founded the city of Baghdād,

which became not only the capital of the Empire and the  
 Abū'l-'Abbās, surnamed Al-Saffāh (750), was the first  
 'Abbāsīd Khalīf. In establishing ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> capital, the new  
 dynasty would have nothing to do with Syria, which had been  
 the home of the Umayyads. It was perilously near the  
 Byzantine frontier, and ~~namely~~ it was too far away from  
 Persia and Khurāsān, whose people had given the 'Abbāsīds  
 the throne. <sup>X/</sup> Al-Kūfa in Al-'Irāq was therefore made  
 the capital, and the Khalīf built his first palace, the  
 Hāshimīyya, at Al-Anbār, where there began those brilliant  
 courts which were soon to become the talk of the Mediaeval  
 world. Abū'l-'Abbās was a despot and tyrant, but a patron  
 of the arts withal. His long sojourn in Persia and  
 Khurāsān, where music and Islām did not come in conflict,  
 had made him partial to the art, and in this respect he ~~was~~  
 carried on the best traditions of the old Sāsānīd kings, ~~and~~ <sup>of</sup>  
 whose patronage of music the Khalīf was no feeble imitator.  
 No clever musician ever left the presence of Abū'l-'Abbās,  
 says Al-Mas'ūdī, without a gift of money. <sup>0/</sup>

Al-Manṣūr (754) his brother, is said to have been  
 the greatest ruler among the 'Abbāsīds. During his reign,  
 the Persian family of Barmak was given high administrative  
 positions. Khālīd al-Barmakī, his son Yahyā al-Barmakī,  
 and his grandsons Ja'far and Fadl al-Barmakī, played  
 significant parts in the cultivation of the arts, and music  
 especially, during the Golden Age.

X. Le Strange, Baghdād under the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate, 4.

0/ Al-Mas'ūdī, vi, 121-2.

3/ Al-Istisnā'ī, vi, 3.



In the year 762, Al-Mansūr founded the city of Baghdād, which became not only the capital of the Empire and the centre of the Eastern world, but the very home of art, literature, and science, and indeed, all intellectual and artistic activity, the glories of which became quite fabulous. The tales which spread abroad concerning the wonderful city of Al-Mansūr, with its two gorgeous palaces the Bāb al-Dhahab and the Khuld, soon attracted intellectuals from all parts of the world, as well as a crowd of poets & musicians, who were soon to shed lustre on the Khalifate. Al-Mansūr, we are told, was "completely insensible to the charms of music".<sup>M/</sup> Hakam al-Wādī was the leading musician of the day, and although his talents were the byword of Baghdād, yet Al-Mansūr could see nothing clever in his abilities, except, as he once said, that Hakam was certainly "clever" to be able to make money out of his patrons.<sup>2/</sup> Yet Al-Mansūr did not impose his personal dislike or indifference in this matter upon others, since we find the nobility of Baghdād, such as the Khalif's cousins, the sons of Sulaimān ibn 'Alī, his own son Al-Mahdī, and his nephew Muḥammad ibn Abī'l-'Abbās, all eager to patronize music.

(particularly)

Al-Mahdī (775) was fond of music, and his court in the new Qasr al-Mahdī palace was crowded with musicians, & among them, - Hakam al-Wādī, Siyyāt, Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī, & Yazīd (ibn) Haurā'. At the same time, he would not allow his two sons Al-Hādī and Harūn to meddle with music, and

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<sup>M/</sup> Bar Hebraeus says that Al-Mansūr pretended that he did did not know what a pandorē (tunbūr) was, but we have ~~have~~ heard these "stories" before.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vi, 67.



Two eminent musicians were punished for entering the princes' apartments contrary to his orders. I/

There is a good story told of Al-Mahdī and a court musician named Siyyāt that is worthy of a place here. Siyyāt had two instrumental accompanists, one name Hibbāl who played the reed-pipe (mizmār), and another named 'Uqqāb, a performer on the lute ('ūd). The names of these individuals in Arabic, if pronounced in a slightly different way, stand for "whips", "ropes", and "punishment" respectively. One day Al-Mahdī was heard to address some words to his chief eunuch during a reception, and all that the courtiers could hear were the above words of sinister import, which led them to conclude that one or more of their number had fallen into disfavour and were about to pay the penalty. Imagine their relief when Siyyāt, and his two accompanists appeared on the scene. M/

Muir says of the period of Al-Mahdī, - "Music, literature, and philosophy, refined the age". W/ Al-Mahdī himself was fond of singing, and Ibn Khallikān says, "No man had a finer voice than he". X/

Mūsā al-Hādī (785) only reigned a short time. The two musicians who had been punished by his father for entering the princes' apartments, were sent for and installed as court musicians. They were Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī and Ibn Jāmi'. These, with the older Ḥakam al-Wādī, were the great favourites. This khalif had a son 'Abdallāh who was an accomplished singer and performer on the lute ('ūd). O/

I/ Al-Isfahānī, v, 4.

M/ Al-Isfahānī, vi, 7.

W/ Muir, Caliphate, 467.

X/ Ibn Khallikān, iii, 464

O/ Al-Isfahānī, ix, 99.



116.

Hārūn al-Rashīd (786) is the Khalif whose name has become a household word, not merely in the East, but in the West. The magnificence of his palaces at Baghdād, Al-Anbār, and Al-Raqqa, has been much commented upon. His court "was the centre <sup>to</sup> ~~which~~ which, from all parts, flocked the wise and the learned, and at which rhetoric, poetry, history and law, as well as science, medicine, music, and the arts, met with a genial and princely reception, -all of which bore ample fruit in the succeeding reigns". The enchanting pages of The Thousand and One Nights, have revealed Hārūn quite in harmony with this picture. The galaxy of musical talent which thronged his court, must have had millions disbursed in their favour, and among those who benefited were, - Hakam al-Wādī, Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī, Ibn Jāmi', Yahyā al-Makkī, Zalzal, Yazīd Haurā', Fulaih ibn Abī'l-'Aurā', 'Abdallāh ibn Dahmān, Zubair ibn Dahmān, Ishāq al-Mausilī, Mukhāriq, 'Allawaya, Muḥammad ibn al-Hārith, 'Ibthar (?), 'Amr al-Ghazzāl, Abū Sadaqa, Barsūmā, Muḥammad al-Ziff (or al-Raff), and others. The favourite son of Hārūn, who was named Abū 'Īsā, was also a good musician, and we find him at the court of Khalif Al-Wāthiq, taking part in the musical festivities.

Al-Amīn (808) and Al-Ma'mūn, became joint rulers of Empire, the one ruling the West from Baghdād, and the other ruling the East from Merv. They both took the title of Khalif, and this arrangement lasted until 813, when war was declared between them. It resolved itself finally into a struggle between the Arab and Persian factions,

I. Muir, Caliphate, 486.

X. Al-Isfahānī, v, 63. ix, 53.

Y. Muir, Caliphate, 485-9.

X. A concert is described by Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 125.

Y. Al-Mas'ūdī, vi, 420-20.

X. Al-Isfahānī, ix, 103-3.



culminating in the defeat of the former, and the death of Al-Amīn. This Khalif was a man of pleasure who spent his whole time, we are told, with musicians and singing-girls. The latter were gathered for their beauty "from all parts of the Empire". His festivities "were of the most sumptuous kind", and we read ~~on one occasion that~~ <sup>ing</sup> "a hundred sing~~ing~~ girls sang in unison before him, then breaking into companies of ten, and with palm~~o~~branches in their hands, each group advanced in turn and sang before him".<sup>W</sup> Whatever his faults were, he was a patron of the arts. Ishāq al-Mausilī, Mukhāriq, and 'Allawaya were among the famous musicians who received ~~from~~ his bounty.<sup>S</sup> He gave protection to his uncle, <sup>(Prince)</sup> Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī, who was one of the most accomplished musicians of the day. The talents of his kinsman had a particular charm for him,<sup>2</sup> and in the Khalif's last days, when the army of Al-Ma'mūn was investing Baghdād, Al-Amīn found solace in the songs of Ibrāhīm. Al-Mas'ūdī has drawn a pathetic picture of this Khalif, just before the ~~end~~ <sup>end</sup>, sitting by the banks of the Tigris, listening to the voice of his favourite singing-girl Du'afā.<sup>X</sup> His son 'Abdallāh, was quite a talented musician.<sup>H</sup>

Al-Ma'mūn (813) assumed full control of the Khalifate on the overthrow of Al-Amīn, although he remained at Merv until 819. During the interval, both Syria and Al-'Irāq rose in rebellion, and in Baghdād, Prince Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī was proclaimed Khalif. This greatly shocked the orthodox Muslims, because Ibrāhīm openly professed himself a musician, Dībil the poet, suiting the (xxi, 242)

<sup>W</sup> Muir, Caliphate, 488-9.      <sup>2</sup> Al-Isfahānī, ix, 56, 62, 63.

<sup>S</sup> A concert is described by Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 138

<sup>X</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, vi, 426-30.

<sup>H</sup> Al-Isfahānī, ix, 102-3.



men, who devoted their lives to the translation of the  
 occasion, wrote some bitter verses against Ibrāhīm saying,-  
 "If Ibrāhīm is fit to reign, then the Empire has devolved  
 by right to Mukhāriq, Zalzal, and Ibn al-Māriqī (the court  
 musicians)".<sup>I/</sup> He further asked what good could be expected  
 from "a Khalif who made the lute (barbat) his Qur'ān".<sup>Z/</sup>  
 Ibrāhīm's attempt to ~~win~~ gain the Khalifate failed, and he  
 threw himself on the mercy of Al-Mam'un, who spared his  
 life. But from the day of his triumphal entry into  
 Baghdād in 819, until 823, Al-Ma'mūn would not listen to  
 a note of music,<sup>H/</sup> nor permit a musician to be near him, so  
 exasperated was he with the perfidy of his musical kinsman,  
 Ibrāhīm.<sup>H/</sup> The first to break this silence was Muhammad  
 ibn al-Hārith ibn ~~Buskhannar~~<sup>h</sup>, who was admitted to the  
 Khalif's presence.<sup>D/</sup> On the other hand, Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi  
 says that the "silence" only lasted twenty months, and that  
 the first musician who was listened to was another musical  
 kinsman, Abū 'Isā, the talented & handsome son of Hārūn.<sup>W/</sup>  
 At any rate, as soon as the proscription was raised, the  
 famous Ma'mūnī palace rang with the the sounds of voices &  
 instruments. Here appeared Ishāq al-Mausilī, Mukhāriq,  
 'Allawaya, 'Amr ibn Bānā, Ahmad ibn Sadaqa, and 'Aqīd.

Of greater importance to musical culture and learning  
 in general, was Al-Ma'mun's patronage of the Greek sciences.  
 Inclined to Rationalism, he made the Mu'tazali doctrine the  
 state religion, which gave more freedom to independent  
 thought. At Baghdād he instituted a university called the  
Bait al-hikma or "House of Wisdom", where he installed  
 Yahyā ibn Abī Mansūr, the Banū Mūsā, and other learned

I/ Ibn Khallikān, i, 18. See also the lines by Bashshar ibn  
 Burd preserved by Abū'l-'Alā al-Ma'arri, Risālat al-  
ghufrān, 87.

Z/ Al-Isfahānī, xviii, 30. H/ Al-Isfahānī, ix, 52, 67.

D/ Al-Isfahānī, ix, 52, 60, 61.

(v, 106.)

W/ ~~Al-Isfahānī~~ Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 188. Cf. Al-Isfahānī,



men, who devoted their lives to the translation of the Greek sciences and their study, including the science of music, which had already begun <sup>under</sup> earlier khalifs.

Al-Mu'tasim (833) was equally favourable to the arts and sciences, and especially encouraged the ~~translators~~ translators from the Greek. He held out the hand of friendship to the famous philosopher and music theorist Al-Kindī, whose writings became the textbooks for several centuries. Al-Mu'tasim built a new palace in the Mukharrim quarter, which became his residence until 836, when he removed to Sāmarrā, where he built another costly palace. Here, as brilliant a scene was enacted as anything Hārūn of The Thousand and One Nights had staged. The palace sheltered all the musical virtuosi of the day, and their doyen, Ishāq al-Mausilī, was the khalif's "boon companion". The khalif's uncle, the musical Prince Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī, also found favour at his court.<sup>4/</sup> Among other musicians of his munificence were, - Ahmad ibn Yahyā al-Makkī, Zurzūr al-Kabīr,<sup>5/</sup> and Muḥammad ibn 'Amr al-Rūmī.<sup>6/</sup>

Al-Wāthiq (842-47) was the first of the 'Abbāsid khalifs who was actually a real musician. Hammad ibn Ishāq al-Mausilī testified that he was the most learned of the khalifs in this art, and that he was <sup>(an excellent singer and)</sup> a skilled performer on the lute (ūd).<sup>X/</sup> His songs are mentioned by Al-Isfahānī. So much did the art find favour at his court, that one might think that it had been turned into a conservatory of music with Ishāq al-Mausilī as Principal, instead of being the majlis of the "Commander of the Faithful". Among the older musicians at the court were, - Mukhāriq, 'Allawayā,

4/ Al-Isfahānī, viii, 58.

5/ Al-Isfahānī, xii, 92.

6/ Al-Isfahānī, vi, 190.

X/ Al-Isfahānī, viii, 172.

The khalif's son Hārūn was a gifted musician & a brilliant instrumentalist.



'Amr ibn Bānā, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥārith, whilst among the new-comers were, - 'Abdallāh ibn al-'Abbās al-Raḥī'i, Ibn Filā' al-Tunbūrī, Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Sahl, and ~~al-Husayn~~ al-Husayn al-Masūd.

Al-Wāthiq carried forward the spirit of Rationalism inaugurated by Al-Ma'mūn, and gave the fullest encouragement to art and letters. His death in 847, brought to a close the first period of the 'Abbāsid régime, generally known as the "Golden Age" of Islām, by the side of which the civilisation of contemporary Western Europe might be considered mere barbarism.

conquering the northern coast of Africa, and the Mediterranean and invaded Spain. In 711, the army of Spain as far as the Ganges and the Indus. Under the Umayyads, the first capital of this land called al-Andalus, and a small kingdom of the early 'Abbāsids. In 755, the Umayyad dynasty was overthrown in Al-Andalus, and was replaced by the dynasty of the 'Abbāsids. This was 'Abd al-Raḥmān, the only survivor of the house of Umayyad, who had managed to escape the massacre of the 'Abbāsids. He founded a dynasty in the West, and in the following year he entered Cordoba the capital in triumph, and was proclaimed Sultan. Consequently, this land has a history apart from the Khalifate of the East.

'Abd al-Raḥmān (755) laid the foundations for the future greatness of Al-Andalus. The Arab tribes, the Berbers, the "mixed races" (mudharraḥ), whose internecine strife had turned Al-Andalus upside-down for a century, were now subdued, and in spite of the fact

A. The rulers of Al-Andalus however, did not call themselves Khalifa until the time of 'Abd al-Raḥmān III (912).

B. S. Lane Poole, Moors in Spain, 43.



~~al-~~ In ~~al-~~Andalus (Spain), at the western extremity of the Empire, another Khalifate had sprung into being.<sup>A/</sup> This, as Stanley Lane Poole says, was to become "the marvel of the Middle Ages". It was the land which, "when all Europe was plunged in barbaric ignorance and strife, alone held the torch of learning and civilisation bright and shining before the Western world".<sup>2/</sup>

As early as 710, the ~~umayyad~~ Muslim armies, after conquering the northern coast of Africa, crossed the Mediterranean and invaded Spain. By 713, the whole of Spain as far as the Pyrennees had fallen to the invaders. Under the ~~Umayyads~~, governors were appointed to this land called ~~al-~~Andalus, a system which continued under the early 'Abbāsids. In the year 755 however, a refugee landed in Al-Andalus, who was to change the fortunes of the land. This was 'Abd al-Rahmān, the sole survivor of the House of Umayya, who had managed to escape the murderous swords of the 'Abbāsids. Thousands flocked to his banner, and in the following year he entered Cordova the capital in triumph, and was proclaimed Sultān. Henceforth, this land has a history apart from the Khalifate of the East.

'Abd al-Rahmān (756) laid the foundations for the future greatness of Al-Andalus. The Arab tribal factions, the Berbers, the "mixed races" (muwalladūn), whose internecine strife had turned Al-Andalus upside-down for a quarter of a century, were now checked, and in spite of the fact

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<sup>A/</sup> The rulers of Al-Andalus however, did not call themselves khalifs until the time of 'Abd al-Rahmān III (912).

<sup>2/</sup> S. Lane Poole, Moors in Spain, 43.



that his reign was almost entirely taken up by politics, art and letters attained a high prosperity. *we read this singing-girl* 'ajfā'. \*

Hishām I (788) was, unlike his predecessor, extremely pious. This did not prevent him from surrounding himself with men of science, poets, and sages. What his attitude was towards music, we are not told by the annalists. From the fact that the theologians of the Mālikī school dominated at court, it is possible that music may have been proscribed.

Al-Hakam I (796) refused to be governed by the theologians, and they, in turn, fomented rebellion. The new Sultān was a true son of the House of Umayya. "He was gay and sociable, and enjoyed life as it came to him, without the slightest leaning to asceticism. Such a character was wholly objectionable to the bigoted doctors of theology". I/

Al-Hakam I was a free-handed patron of letters, art, and science, and it was during his reign that music began to assume a place of importance at court. Among the court musicians were, - 'Abbās ibn <sup>al-</sup>Nasā'ī, Al-Manṣūr (a Jew), 'Alūn, Zarqūn, 'Abd al-Wahhāb, and Bishāra/ al-Zāmir.

'Abd al-Rahmān II (822) did not inherit the strength of mind of his predecessor, and the theologians soon regained power. ~~unusually~~ Yet, they did not interfere with the artistic and intellectual tastes of the court, and culture in general flourished. O/ Music and musicians received greater attention than ever, a fact borne out by the life of Ziryāb, the chief court musician. He was the "boon companion" of the Sultān, who shared his meals with the musician. The great musical feature of the period was the music school of Ziryāb, which lasted until the final

I/ S. Lane Poole, op. cit., 74.

O/ Casiri, ii, 34.

\*/ Aghānī, xx, 148, 149.

al-haggari, Anal., ii, 97-8



extinction of the Western Khalifate. On the death of this Sultān in 852, Al-Andalus was split up into a number of petty kingdoms, although a sultān still ruled at Cordova. The Arabian Empire at the opening of the 8th century embraced half the then-known civilised world. Westward, it extended through Egypt, Tripoli, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, into Spain, and eventually into Italy. Northward, it included Syria, Armenia, & a portion of Asia Minor. Eastward it stretched through Iraq, Ajāmī, Tabaristān, Khurāsān, Khwārizm, Bukhārā, to the borders of Tartary, and through Persia, Afghanistan, to Sind. Baghdād was the capital of this vast empire, and Al-'Irāq was theemporium of the east. Baghdād was a city of great populousness and magnificence. The wealth of the Khalif, nobility, and merchants was almost fabulous. Al-mahdī spent six million pieces of gold on a single pilgrimage. Harūn, richer still, was able to give away two and a half million at one time, whilst at his death, the treasury showed nine hundred million sterling. The magnificence of the palaces, mosques, colleges, and official residences, the luxurious appointments and furnishing of the interiors, the gorgeous retinues and equipages, the sumptuous fêtes, banquets, and other gatherings, together with the splendour of social life, not only in the capital, but in all the great cities, from Cordova to Samarcand, surpasses anything of its kind in history.

Yet, what has all this to do with music? A great deal. Everywhere we see culture progressing dependent upon economic and political forces, and side by side with this material luxury & political grandeur, we find intellectual wealth and aesthetic gratification.

These divisions were, of course, numerous at this time. However much we may feel inclined to doubt the veracity of the annalists in these matters, it has to be confessed that the figures quoted from the highest of the layers are invariably proportionate.



## (2)

The Arabian Empire at the opening of the 'Abbāsid era, embraced half the then-known civilised world. Westward, it extended through Egypt, Tripoli, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, <sup>A</sup> into Spain, and eventually into Italy. Northward, it included Syria, <sup>(Kurdistan)</sup> ~~Armenia~~, & a portion of Asia Minor. Eastward it stretched through 'Irāq 'Ajāmī, Ṭabaristān, Khurāsān, Khwārizm, Bukhārā, to the borders of Tartary, and through Persia, Afghanistan, to Sind. Baghdād was the capital of this vast empire, and Al-'Irāq was the emporium of the east. Baghdād was a city of great populousness and magnificence. The wealth of the Khalifs, nobility, and merchants was almost fabulous. <sup>M</sup> Al-Mahdī spent six million pieces of gold on a single pilgrimage! Hārūn, richer still, was able to give away two and a half million at one time, whilst at his death, the treasury showed nine hundred million sterling. The magnificence of the palaces, mosques, colleges, and official residences, the luxurious appointments and furnishing of the interiors, the gorgeous retinues and equipages, the sumptuous fêtes, banquets, and other gatherings, together with the splendour of social life, not only in the capital, but in all the great cities, from Cordova to Samarqand, surpasses anything of its kind in history.

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- <sup>M</sup> However much we may feel inclined to doubt the veracity of the annalists in these matters, it has to be confessed that the figures quoted, from the highest to the lowest, are invariably proportionate.



It has been called "The Augustan Age of Arabian Literature", for not only belles lettres, but science (including musical science) and philosophy, were patronized with as much zeal. Colleges were opened, libraries founded, observatories and laboratories built, and "all this brilliance of literary & scientific attainment is contemporary with Charlemagne, in other words when the whole of Christian Europe was submerged in a barbarism very insufficiently tempered by the educational reform which he initiated".<sup>2/</sup>

The art of music naturally fared well under such conditions. The courts were crowded with singing-girls & professional musicians, who were treated with unheard-of favours and generosity, which are ~~would~~ proverbial with the Arabs today. Much of this was due to Persian example, since the 'Abbāsids desired to emulate the glories of the Sāsānids of old in this respect.<sup>X/</sup> Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī got 150,000 pieces of gold in one gift from Khalif Al-Hādī. Mukhāriq received 100,000 pieces from the hands of Hārūn. Hakam al-Wādī had 600,000 nearly pieces of silver bestowed on him in two gifts from Hārūn and Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī. These people were certainly the virtuosi, but even so, the ordinary minstrel made a small fortune by his art in these times.

to be able to do justice to the wine-cup, and not infrequently we find them under the influence of wine. Al-Amīn however, although fond of the wine-cup himself, did not extend his bounty to his musicians, al-Mausilī.

<sup>2/</sup> Owen, Skeptics of the Italian Renaissance, 65.

<sup>X/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, ii, 158. ~~For al-Mausilī brought an article of gold~~

Prince Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī for payment for a song given to a singing-girl. Before the prince, al-Mausilī to prove that he had fulfilled his contract by the performance of the singing-girl, he had to have none of it, and walked away with the curse of Allah on all his musicians, and by default against the whole of their vocation, the song of the minstrel. ~~it.~~



Even their professional life was not so sacred as that of the priest. It has already been mentioned that the favour ~~shown~~ shown to musicians was resented by the theologians (ʿulamā) who objected to music on religious grounds. Now, the poets even are aroused to jealousy. It was the poet Abū Nuwās (d. ca. 810) who wrote the line, - "The mien of a singer (mughannī) and the elegance of a freethinker (zindik)". Even the singing-girls were the object of envy, since the poetess Fadl once said, - "They never ask less than a gold-mine, and treat a poor man as if he were a dog".

Yet although we see these musicians enjoying wealth and patronage, and some of them like Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī, his son Ishāq al-Mausilī, Mukhāriq, and others, were even the "boon companions" of the Khalifs, <sup>I/</sup> yet their vocation placed them in an anomalous position. The "letter" of the law proscribed them because they were the practitioners of an art which, even <sup>if</sup> it were not actually "sinful" (ḥarām), <sup>(it)</sup> was "religiously unpraiseworthy" (makrūh), as Burton says. <sup>A/</sup> However much the Arabs delighted in a musician's company, it was apparently, some spiritual consolation and satisfaction that they recognized him as a "sinner". Indeed, musicians had no standing at law, at any rate in regard to their art. <sup>Z/</sup>

I/ The virtuosi, like the "boon companions", were expected to be able to do justice to the wine-cup, and not infrequently we find them under the influence of wine. Al-Amin however, although fond of the wine-cup himself, did not extend its bounty to his musicians. Al-Isfahānī, vi, 72.

A/ Burton, Arabian Nights, vi, 59.

Z/ A musician named Ja'far al-Ṭabbāl brought an action against Prince Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī for payment for lessons given to a singing-girl. Before the judge, he offered to prove that he had fulfilled his <sup>therefore</sup> contract by the performance of the singing-girl, but the judge would have none of it, and walked out of the court crying, - "The curse of Allāh on all you musicians". Judgment went by default against the musician. Al-Isfahānī, xiv, 5. Musicians, like modern "bookmakers", <sup>severe</sup> ~~were~~ tolerated in their avocation, but dare not go to law on account of it. ~~Even today in Muslim lands, a singer cannot sue for wages.~~ Even today in Muslim lands, a singer cannot sue for wages. Al-Hidāya, iv, 212.



Even their professional life was not so serene as might be imagined, for often their duties were most arduous and exacting.<sup>C/</sup> Many too, tasted both whip and dungeon at the hands of the Khalifs and nobility.<sup>\*/</sup> Still, on the whole, their lot was certainly better than that of Haydn or Mozart at European courts nine centuries later!

Besides the virtuosi, there were two other classes of musicians, the instrumentalists (mutribūn) and the singing-girls (qaināt). The first were either slaves or freemen who were attached to the virtuosi as accompanists, and their position, as freemen, was an inferior one. The second class were slaves, who, when they were betrothed or became mothers, were given their freedom.<sup>B/</sup> At the courts, some ten or twelve of the virtuosi were always to be found, whilst thirty, fifty or even a hundred singing-girls were also kept.

As in the Umayyad days, the singing-girls were usually taught by the virtuosi, more frequently at their schools of music. In the "Golden Age", the famous Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī, the leading musician of the day, had his music school for the training of the singing-girls. High prices were asked for these female musicians, for they were invariably highly accomplished, not only in music, but in literature and science.<sup>A/</sup>

<sup>C/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 138. We have mentioned that the musicians of the Umayyads were the journalists of the day. Under the 'Abbāsids they were often "spies". Knowing that music went hand in hand with the wine-cup, and that "men in wine speak the truth", the 'Abbāsids looked to their musicians to keep them informed of "what the people talked about". Al-Isfahānī, v, 113.

<sup>B/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xix, 136. <sup>\*/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, III, 162. V, 7.

<sup>A/</sup> In the Alf Laila wa Laila, ii, 493, we read of a singing-girl versed in syntax, poetry, jurisprudence, exegesis, philosophy, musical science, arithmetic, & geodesy, geometry, fables of the ancients, the Qur'ān, traditions, medicine, logic, rhetoric, composition, and the art of playing the lute. See also, i, 280; iv, 163. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ii, 198. Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī, selling a singing-girl to Ja'far al-Barmakī, asked a high price. The latter said, - "What is her particular merit that she is priced so high?". The musician replied, "Though



It still continued to be the custom at court for the virtuosi to be hidden from the presence of the Khalif by a curtain, although from Lane it would appear that what really took place was that there was a dais or stage for the musicians, which was screened off.<sup>4/</sup> The accounts in the Kitāb al-aghānī do not admit of this interpretation generally. Ibn Jāmi<sup>c</sup> describes the music saloon of the court in the following story,-

"I was led into a large and splendid saloon, at the end of which there hung a gorgeous silken curtain. In the middle of the room were several seats facing the curtain, and four of these seats had been taken possession of by four musicians, three females and one male; with lutes (ʿūdān) in their hands. I was placed next to the man, and the command was given for the concert to begin. After these four had sung, I turned to my companion and asked him to accompany me with his instrument, saying to him,- 'Sharpen (shadd) the string of your lute thus, to raise the pitch (ṭabaqa), and go down to this fret (qastān) thus when playing'. I then sang a melody of my own composition, and when finished, five or six eunuchs came from behind the curtain and demanded the name of the melody. I replied,- 'It is my own'. After they had returned with the message, Salām al-Abrash (the chief eunuch) came from behind the curtain and said,- 'You lie! it is by Ibn Jāmi<sup>c</sup> '.....Again we all sang in the

(continued from previous folio).

*(hands down her name, -*

she had no other merit than of singing this melody which is mine, she is worth the price and more". ~~It is highly~~ It is highly probably that the singing-girl of Egypt today ~~was~~ ʿAlima ("learned") from the old status of her class. Cf. Lane, Modern Egyptians, 355, who says that it might be derived from the Hebrew word ʿalmāh = "a girl".

<sup>4/</sup> See Lane's "Notes" to the Arabian Nights, i, 203.



same order, and <sup>a</sup>agin I sang one of my own melodies, and at once again I was asked its composer, and once more I said, - 'It is my own', and once more did the chief eunuch say, 'You lie! it is by Ibn Jāmi'. Then I said, 'Yes, and I am he'. As soon as I had uttered these words, the curtain opened and Faḍl ibn Rabī' cried, - 'The Commander of the Faithful', and Hārūn appeared upon the arm of Ja'far al-Barmakī, and, approaching me said, - 'Ah it is you Ibn Jāmi'. . . . . Hārūn then reclined upon a divan and commanded me to sing some new melody, and I then sang my song of the negress".<sup>S</sup>

In this account, we see the Khalif behind the curtain listening to music, and then practically tête à tête with the musician who performs. A similar sort of thing occurs over and over agin in the Kitāb al-aghānī. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi<sup>also</sup> relates that when Ishāq al-Maṣṣilī and Khalif Al-Mahdī became reconciled, the musician used to say, - "I reclined with the khalif (on a divan) and he patted me with his hand as a familiar friend would do".<sup>X</sup>

During the period covered by "The Golden Age", Arabian music made greater progress as an art than during any other period. This was due primarily to two causes, which can be viewed apart from industrial prosperity or political poise. These causes were the influence of Shī'a<sup>W</sup> and Mu'tazilī<sup>2</sup> ideas upon Islām, and the dominant<sup>n</sup> note of Greek scientific culture in secular life. The former brought a more tolerant attitude towards music in-so-far as Islām was concerned.

<sup>S</sup>. Al-Isfahānī, vi, 78-80 (abridged)

<sup>X</sup>. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 188.

<sup>W</sup>. The Shi'ites were the sect (shī'a<sup>a</sup>) or followers of 'Alī. They were always more tolerant & open-minded on the question of music than the Sunnites or orthodox Muslims. The Persians are Shi'ites.

<sup>2</sup>. The Mu'tazilites ("Seceders") were the Rationalists of the day.



Strange to say however, the theologians had some power at court. Whilst the Umayyads kept the theologian/ to his private and domestic sphere, the 'Abbāsids brought him into court, and made him take part in public policy. Favouring the theologian in this way, was evidently considered a better policy than keeping him at a distance. The personal contact seems to have enabled the Khalifs to get their own way to a considerable extent, and certainly it obtained so far as music and other "forbidden pleasures" were concerned. Hārūn said to Ibrāhīm ibn Sa'd al-Zuhrī the theologian one day, - "I hear that Mālik ibn Anas makes singing a crime". The court theologian replied, - "Has Mālik the right to loose and bind? ..... If I ~~was~~ heard Mālik condemning it, and I had the power, I would improve his education". ~~X~~ Hārūn was amused at the reply. Indeed, what other reply could Al-Zuhrī have made, seeing that everyone knew, and many to their cost, that it was Hārūn alone who could <sup>and</sup> "loose ~~un~~ bind". Of course, the orthodox still murmured, and we have the poet Bashshar ibn Burd, himself a Rationalist, voicing their opinions in a satire, saying how incongruous it was to find a "Successor of the Prophet in the midst of wine-bottles and lutes". ~~X~~ The <sup>hasquinate</sup> ~~was~~ brought him to his death.

Proficiency in the theoretical side of musical art had long been established, but this did not prevent further progress. In general culture we see the influence of both Byzantin<sup>u</sup> and Persia, the latter perhaps the most marked. Persian influence, especially that from Khurāsān, made itself

~~X~~. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 180.

~~X~~ Al-Isfahānī, iii, 71. De Meynard translates the passage as "lutes and oboes", but the text has ziqq wa'l-'ūd. Cf. however, the lines quoted by Abū'l-'Alā al-Ma'arri where it runs, - "flute (nāy) and the lute ('ūd)".



felt on the accession of Al-Ma'mūn (813), for the reason that it pushed back the Arabian ascendancy which Al-Amin represented.<sup>0/</sup> Its effect on music however, was less than in other spheres, and perhaps quite unimportant. Byzantium contributed very little to musical culture. ~~What~~ What the Arabs got from Byzantium was the ancient Greek theory, which was a closed book practically in the land of its birth, and it was not until the ~~translators~~ translators turned the ~~works~~ works of the ancient Greek theorists into Arabic, that the East revived its interest in them. From these sources, the Arabs certainly borrowed, but this did not find any <sup>considerable</sup> expression during the "Golden Age". That we know quite definitely from Al-Iṣfahānī.<sup>1/</sup>

On the whole, theoretical progress during the period under survey was practically indigeneous. Ishāq al-Mawṣilī came forward, as the chief musician of the day, to lay down, and fix definitely, the theory which appears to have fallen into neglect since the time of Yūnis al-Kātib. It was Ishāq says Al-Iṣfahānī, who first established methodically the genres (ainās) of the melodic modes (asābi') and the different kinds (tarā'iq) of rhythmic modes (īqā'āt), which, in the works of Yūnis al-Kātib, were insufficiently indicated.<sup>2/</sup> Al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad, one of the most famous scholars of the day, contributed the first scientific books on musical theory, in his Kitāb al-nagham (Book of Notes), and Kitāb al-īqā' (Book of Rhythm).<sup>1/</sup> More important still were the treatises of the celebrated Al-Kindī, no less than eight or nine of these standing to his credit.<sup>2/</sup> From the latter, we get a close insight into the theory and practice of the great virtuosi of the "Golden Age". Collectors of

<sup>0/</sup> Jurjī Zaidān, 185-6.

<sup>1/</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, v, 53.

<sup>1/</sup> Al-Fihrist, 43.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Fihrist, 257.



songs such as Yahyā al-Makkī, Ahmad ibn Yahyā al-Makkī, Fulaih ibn Abī'l-'Aurā', and Ishāq al-Mausilī, issued several works, whilst the last named compiled a dozen or so books containing the biographies of famous musicians. ~~M~~ It is here that we see how considerable ~~was~~ the purely Arabian traditions were in the music of the period. (\*)

The rhythmic modes (lqā'at) appear to have been little different from what we saw in Umayyad times. These are fully described by Al-Kindī in his Risāla fī ijzā' khabarriya now preserved in Berlin. ~~A~~ These modes were now named, -

1. Al-thaqīl al-awal.
2. Al-thaqīl al-thānī.
3. Al-Mākhūrī.
4. Khafīf al-thaqīl.
5. Al-Ramal,
6. Khafīf al-ramal
7. Khafīf al-khafīf.
8. Al-hazaj.

al-mūsīqā.

The only difference from the names of the Umayyads is that we have a khafīf al-khafīf mentioned instead of a ramal tunbūrī. We see these modes being adopted by the Persians, who apparently did not possess them. It was not until the time of Hārūn (786) that Persia adopted the ramal rhythmic mode, which was introduced to them by a musician named Salmak. ~~S~~

In the melodic modes (asābi'), the old principles still obtained, but innovations had made their appearance. Ishāq al-Mausilī had composed a song which attracted the attention of Prince Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī, who wrote to the

~~M~~ Al-Fihrist, 141-3. Al-Isfahānī, i, 183. vi, 17, 18. xv, 159.

~~A~~ No. 5503. fol. 31, v.  
~~S~~ Al-Isfahānī, i, 151.

(\*) Ishāq al-Mausilī sang the old melodies.  
al-Isfahānī, xviii, 175.



it.

former asking him to let him have ~~it~~ Ishāq replied by letter giving him particulars of the verse together with "its rhythm (īqā') and its basīt, its 'course' (majrā) and its melodic mode (aspa'), its proportionate dividing (tajz'iyya) and its parts (aqṣām), the ~~succession~~ succession of its notes and the places of the rests (maqāti'), the particulars of its modulations (adwār) and its measures (awzān)". ~~M.~~

The passage gives us a fair example of the technical nomenclature of the period. īqā', aspa', and majrā, we are already acquainted with. The basīt or basāt ~~the~~ <sup>(after to have been)</sup> divisions of the rhythmic modes (īqā'āt) ~~the~~ according to their tempi, into slow (thaqīl) or quick (khafīf). The word for the proportionate dividing of the melody or rhythm has its root in jaza'a, which opens up an interesting speculation for the origin of the modern term jazz. ~~H.~~ The maqāti' (rests) are ~~usually~~ detailed in the rhythmic modes given by Al-Kindī. The adwār (sing. daur) were made up of the first tetrachord of one melodic mode (aspa') and the second tetrachord of another.

Transposition scales called ṭabaqāt (sing. ṭabaqa) were practised. Ishāq al-Mausilī tells us that he spent years in mastering these ṭabaqāt. But this is one of the little exaggerations of Al-Isfahānī. Ishāq was one of the "stars" of Arabian music, and everything that he did, according to the annalists, was invariably accomplished in a grandiose way. Instead of having two or three modes

~~M.~~ Al-Isfahānī, ix, 54, 56.

~~O.~~ Both editions of the Kitāb al-aghānī have ٨, ١٩. De Meynard rightly suggests that this should be adwār. (Ibrahim, 325). Strange to say, Rosegarten (Lib. Cant. 183), in quoting this passage, actually omits this word.

~~H.~~ See my article on The Arab Influence on Music in the Western Soudan in the Musical Standard, Nov., 1924.



such as we have nowadays, the Arabs had more, and these ṭabaqāt were like changes of key signature.

There is another interesting passage, which appears to show that the Arabs employed genres similar to the Greeks. The tetrachord was the theoretical landmark of the Arabs, because it was contained within the stretch of the hand on the lute. <sup>I/</sup> The Greeks called their variations of the tetrachord, - genres (γέννη), of which there were three, - the diatonic, chromatic, and enharmonic. In the next century, these were known to the Arabs as the gawī, khunthawī, and rasīm respectively. <sup>O/</sup> That the Arabs of the period that we are concerned with used these genres is quite likely, as the following passage seems to show. <sup>H/</sup>

"I read in one of the books that Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan (& I think that he is Ibn Muḥ<sup>(a)</sup> ~~ibn~~) mentions Ishaq al-Mausilī. Then he says, - 'His art was correct in principles (usūl), and his notes / wonderful of arrangement (tartīb), and his division (qism) just of measures (awzān). And he used to perform in <sup>all the</sup> ~~many~~ busut (sing. basāt) of the rhythms (iqā'āt), and which-ever basāt he wished to sing a song in, he used the agwā (= gawī) song which was the basāt of the ablest of the ~~music~~ (qudamā'). .... Sometimes he would seek the very threshold of the ancients (awā'il) and would follow their manner in their methods. Then he would build upon the rasīm, and work it out according to their example. He would then make it gawī, and so his work became strong and firm uniting in it two states, - the strong in nature (& it is easy of method), and the khunthā (= khunthawī) in which are many notes (nagham) and their arrangement (tartīb) between the

<sup>I/</sup> This point is worth noting in connection with Wead's theories in his Contributions to the History of Musical Scales, 453.

older people







This Ziryāb, whilst he was at the court of Hārūn (786), had introduced some novel features to the lute. Whilst his instrument was "equal in size and made of the same wood", it was heavier by nearly one-third. His strings also were made differently from those in use previously. They were made of silk and not spun with hot water. ~~M/~~ The second, third, & fourth strings, he claimed, were "made of the entrails of a young lion, which are known to be far superior to those of any other animal in point of strength, deepness of tone, and clearness of sound." Besides this, he claimed, they would bear a much longer pulsation without being injured, and were not so liable to changes of temperature. ~~MM/~~

We read of large bands of singing-girls playing ~~lutes~~ lutes in these days; for these were the special instruments for the accompaniment. Only occasionally do we read of the mi'zafa (~~Antique~~ <sup>? psaltery</sup>) or tunbūr (pandore) being used. More general for the accompaniment, after the lute, were the wood-wind instruments (mazāmīr), the drum (ṭabl) and the tambourine (duff). Open-air music consisted of drums (tubūl) and reed-pipes (sūrṇāyāt), ~~\*~~ and the court military band of Al-Amin was thus constituted, ~~X/~~ which shows that the old military music of the Pagan Arabs still held the field in spite of alien influences.

Some writers have imagined that these bands were directed by a conductor with ḥaṭn in hand. ~~A/~~ This, we believe, is due to a misinterpretation of a passage in the ʿIqd al-farīd which runs,—"Ibrāhīm (al-Mausilī) was the first to beat the rhythm (īqāʿ) with a qadīb". ~~B/~~ This "beating" was what we have already described in connection with the "improvisation". ~~C/~~

~~M/~~ Cf the text to fully appreciate the meaning.

~~MM/~~ Al-Maqqarī, Analectes, ii, 88. Moh. Dyn., ii, 116-21. 410.

~~X/~~ Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 138.

~~A/~~ Syed Ameer 'Ali, Short. Hist., 451. Perron, Femmes Arabes.  
F. Salvador Daniel, 98. Fétis, Hist. Gen., ii, 121:

The latter attributes the ʿIqd account to Ishāq al-Mausilī

~~B/~~ Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, iii, 188.

~~C/~~ The custom was much older than Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī. Cf.  
Al-Isfahānī, i, 97.

~~\*~~ The text has sūrṇāyāt which ~~were~~ <sup>were</sup> ~~flutes~~ flutes probably.



parts. First, the rhythm, metre, and words of a song were taught to the student. Then, the melody was introduced. The doctrine of the ethos was now definitely linked up with music. This old Semitic idea had been strengthened by the doctrines of the Sabaeans of Harrān, and ancient Greek theories. Everything terrestrial was ~~was~~ connected with something celestial. The seven notes of the scale corresponded to the planets. The twelve signs of the zodiac, were associated with the four pegs, four frets, and four strings of the lute. The four strings were affiliated with the primeval elements, the winds, the seasons, the humours, the mental faculties, colours, perfumes, quarters of the zodiac, <sup>m</sup> Moon, and the world, and so on. Al-Kindī deals with this question at considerable length.<sup>H/</sup> In Al-Andalus, we see that the doctrine was in full swing at the time of Ziriyāb.<sup>M/</sup>

We have mentioned the music school at Baghdād controlled by Ibrāhīm al-Maṣṣilī. Unfortunately, we get no information ~~about~~<sup>about</sup> the didactic methods which obtained there. Ishāq al-Maṣṣilī gives us some idea of his musical studies. He says, - "I spent ten years in mastering the pitch (maḍī') of each scale transposition (ṭabaqa), and each note (naghma), and the places from which the melodies (naghām) are derived".<sup>Z/</sup> Ishāq was the first to introduce the false setto (taknīth).

In Al-Andalus we get better news ~~in the~~<sup>in the</sup> music school founded by Ziriyāb. Before his day says the erudite Julian Ribera, the professors of singing had no other method of teaching their pupils than to sing before them, and then get them to imitate their example to the best of their ability.<sup>X/</sup> Ziriyāb changed all this. He divided the curriculum into three

(fol 30.)

~~H/~~ Berlin MS. No. 5530, ~~manuscript~~

~~M/~~ Al-Maqqarī, Moh. Dyn., ii, 118.

~~Z/~~ Al-Isfahānī, v, 57-8.

~~X/~~ Ribera, la enseñanza de los musulmanes españoles.



parts. First, the rhythm, metre, and words of a song were taught to the accompaniment of a musical instrument. Then, the melody in its simple state was mastered. Finally, the "gloss" (zā'idā) was introduced. The following is the method adopted by Ziryāb with beginners. "Whenever a youth came to him for the purpose of taking lessons in vocal music, he made him sit down on the round cushion called miswara, and bade him exert the full power of his voice. If his voice was weak, he was made to tie his turban round his waist, - a practice which is well known to increase the voice. .... If the youth stammered, or could not well open his mouth, <sup>or</sup> if he had the habit of clenching his teeth whenever he spoke, he bade him put inside his mouth a small piece of wood three inches (three fingers) in width, which he was to keep there day and night ~~was~~ until his jaws were well expanded. This being done, he made him cry out to the top of his voice, yā hajjām or ah!, ~~then~~ telling him to protract the sound as much as possible: if he found that he uttered those words in a clear, powerful, and sonorous voice, <sup>M</sup> he admitted him into the number of his pupils, and spared no trouble or fatigue to make him an accomplished singer; if on the contrary, he took no further pains with him". <sup>H</sup>

Notwithstanding the inordinate elevation of musical art and belles lettres during the "Golden Age", the great classical standards fell into desuetude. The old qasīda which "breathed of the desert", was a thing of the past. The littérateurs ~~now~~ were Persians for the most part, and, as citizens of gay and festive communities, they saw little ~~interest~~ interest in the stern ideals of Arab life which formed the background of Arabic poetry. Hence, a new school arose, in which we find "the maddest gaiety and the shamefullest

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<sup>M</sup> Literally, - "Without any roughness, nor straightness, nor narrowness of production".

<sup>H</sup> Al-Maqqarī, Moh. Dyn., ii, 121. Analectes, ii, 88-9.



The virtuosity of the "Golden Age" was unifying force, for frivolity; strains of lofty meditation mingled with a world-wide pessimism; delicate sentiment, unforced pathos, and glowing rhetoric; but seldom the manly self-reliance, the wild, invigorating freedom and inimitable freshness of Badawī song".<sup>2/</sup>

Music, dependent on the song, which was far more in favour than instrumental performance, became similarly affected. As far back as the days of Ma'bad & Ibn Suraij, there had been a ~~wa~~ growing preference for a lighter (khafif) rhythmic mode in place of the more serious one (kāmil tāmm).<sup>3/</sup> The craze for the former grew, and the hazaj and mākhūrī rhythmic modes were the most frequent in demand. Hakam al-Wādī, being upbraided by his son for pandering to the taste of public in this way with the hazaj rhythm answered him:- "My son, for thirty years I have sung in the thaqīl rhythmic modes and hardly gained a living, yet in three years of singing in the hazaj, I have earned more money than thou hast seen in thy life".<sup>4/</sup> It was the old story, the musician had to get his living, and art had to go by the board. Even a great artiste like Ishāq al-Mausilī had to bow to the demand for the hazaj,<sup>0/</sup> whilst his father made his name with the mākhūrī.<sup>5/</sup>

Yet, he was recognized as the leading poet of the capital. Having made a fortune, he retired to his native town, but soon returned to Baghdad, and was present at the

<sup>2/</sup> Nicholson, Lit. Hist. of the Arabs, 291.  
<sup>3/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, i, 116.  
<sup>0/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, v, 83, 89, 115.  
<sup>5/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vi, 66.



(3)

The virtuosi of the "Golden Age" won undying fame, for their names have not only been handed down in verse and story, but they are still boasted of by the people. How real this fame was, we know from the enchanting pages of the Thousand and One Nights. Take away those alluring musical interludes, ~~which~~ those escapades of the virtuosi and the singing-girls, and there would be a relish wanting.

The first great musician of the 'Abbāsid era was Ḥakam al-Wādī, or Abū Yahyā Ḥakam ibn Maimūn al-Wādī. He was a freeman of Al-Walīd I (705-15) and was born at Wādī al-Qurā, his father, of Persian origin, having been a hairdresser who had amassed a small fortune. On his father's death Ḥakam became a successful trader in oil, but taking a liking for music, he went to his compatriot 'Umar al-Wādī for lessons, and in due course, his master presented him at the court of Al-Walīd II (743-44), where his performances brought him a reward of 1000 pieces of gold. He remained at court until the death of this khalif. After this he languished in obscurity until the time of Al-Mansūr (754-75), when he set out for Baghdād, where he was immediately taken up by the Khalif's cousin Muḥammad ibn Abī'l-'Abbās. Fame came rather late to him, for he was now over fifty years of age. Yet, he was recognized as the leading musician of the capital. Having made a fortune, he retired to his native town, but soon returned to Baghdād, and was present at the courts of Al-Mandī (775), Al-Hādī (785), and Hārūn (786). At the court of Al-Hādī he managed to defeat Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī and Ibn Jāmi' in a tournament of song, carrying off the first prize of 300,000 pieces of silver. Later, Ḥakam



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went to the court of Prince Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī, then governor of Damascus, where he composed no less than 200 melodies for this prince, for which he received 299,000 pieces of silver.<sup>X/</sup> Retiring finally to Wādī al-Qurā, he died about the middle of Hārūn's reign, at the age of about 81.<sup>S/</sup> Hakam is classed among the great singers of the Arabs,<sup>I/</sup> and was acknowledged to be an expert in the hazaj rhythm.<sup>2/</sup>

Siyyāt <sup>(d. 785)</sup> ~~(was the popular cognomen of)~~ Abū Wahb 'Abdallāh ibn Wahb, a freeman of the Banū Khuzā'i. He was born at Mecca about 739, and although his career was short, it was a distinguished one. He had two excellent teachers, who were well versed in the best musical traditions of the ~~Umayyad~~ Orthodox and Umayyad periods. These were Yūnis al-Kātib, the author of the first Kitāb al-aghānī, and Burdān, an old musician who had heard 'Azza al-Mallā', Ibn Muḥarrar, Ibn Suraij, Jamīla, and Ma'bad.<sup>W/</sup> Siyyāt became one of the foremost lutenists and singers of his day, as well as a composer of repute.<sup>XX/</sup> During the reign of Al-Mahdī (775) he established himself in Baghdād, and soon won success at court. He died in the prime of life in 785. His two greatest pupils were Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī and Ibn Jāmi'. One day, the former was asked by his son Ishāq al-Mausilī, who was the composer of a certain song, when Ibrāhīm replied,—"The composer was a man who, had he lived, would not have taken a second place to me or to any other musician who is at present favoured by the Khalif. This melody is by Siyyāt".<sup>I/</sup>

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X/ This broken amount was "policy" on the part of the prince. To have given as much as the Khalif, would have been lese majesté.

S/ Al-Isfahānī, vi, 64-8. I/ Al-Isfahānī, v, 9.

2/ Al-Isfahānī, v, 36. vi, 13, 66. XX/ Al-Isfahānī, v, 9.

W/ Al-Isfahānī, vii, 141. (I/ Al-Isfahānī, vi, 7-10.



Yahyā al-Makki, was the name of Abū 'Uthmān ibn Marzūq al-Makki. He was a freeman of the House of Umayya, and came from Mecca as his name tells us. An estimable artiste and composer, he was justly considered the doyen of the musicians of Al-Hijāz. It was he who taught Ibn Jāmi', Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī, and Fulaih ibn <sup>Abi'l-</sup>'Aurā', the classical traditions of Al-Hijāz.<sup>2/</sup> He was present at the courts of Al-Mahdī (775), Hārūn (786), and Al-Ma'mūn (813). Al-Amīn (809) thought so highly of his abilities that he paid him 10,000 pieces of silver for one lesson in music which he gave his brother Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī. As a singer he was praised by no less a person than Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī. His fame however, rests more upon his literary work, since his Kitāb fi'l-aghānī (Book of Songs) comprising the best examples of the ancient song (ghinā' al-qadīm) became the standard collection until his son Ahmad issued a revised ~~edition~~ edition which comprised 3,000 songs. Although Yahyā is classed among the foremost who composed works of this kind, Al-Isfahānī points out that his classification of the modes displays "extreme confusion". He does not appear to have been a careful chronicler, and it is possibly due to him, but perhaps more so to 'Amr ibn Bānā, that so many errors crept in. There is a story told of Ishāq al-Mausilī who, knowing how unreliable Yahyā was as a historian, set a trap for him. One day, before Hārūn, Ishāq invented <sup>the</sup> a name of an individual, and then asked Yahyā for information concerning him. Yahyā then began expatiating on this man's genealogy. When Ishāq ~~was~~ explained that the name did not exist, Yahyā's reputation as a genealogist was at an end, so far as Hārūn was concerned.<sup>3/</sup>

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vi, 17.

<sup>3/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vi, 16-24.



youth he lost his father, and his <sup>(d. 864)</sup> son of the above, was  
 "one of the most praiseworthy of the narrators (rawāt) of  
 music (ghinā'), and the most learned in its science". Not  
 content with revising the work of his father, <sup>A</sup> he issued a  
 collection known as the Kitāb mujarrad fī'l-aghānī (Book  
 of <sup>Choice</sup> Songs) ~~which became one of the~~ which became one of the  
 text-books for the similar investigations of Ishāq al-  
 Maṣṣilī. It was compiled for Muḥammad ibn 'Abdallāh ibn  
 Tāhir, a brother of the musical theorist, and it comprised  
 some 14,000 songs. As a practical musician he was praised  
 by Ishāq al-Maṣṣilī, which was the means of his receiving  
 a gift of 20,000 pieces of silver from Khalif Al-Mu'taṣim  
 (833). He first appeared at the court of Al-Ma'mūn (813) <sup>B</sup>  
 and finally at that of Al-Mutawakkal (847). <sup>D</sup> He is  
 sometimes called Zūnain al-Makkī, <sup>I</sup> and, in the 'Iqd al-  
 farīd, there is an account of Zūnain and two other musicians  
 named Al-Ḥasan al-Masḍūd and Dubais, at the house of Abū  
 'Isā ibn al-Mutawakkal, and they are called "the cleverest  
 men in singing". Ahmad ibn al-Makkī died in 864. <sup>4</sup>

Ibn Jāmi', whose full name was Abū'l-Qāsim Ismā'il  
 ibn Jāmi', was born at Mecca. He was an Arab of noble  
 blood, since both his father and mother belonged to the  
 house of Saḥm, one of the principal branches of the Quraish.  
 He was destined for a profession suitable to one of such  
 a station, and received an excellent education, especially <sup>7</sup>  
 in law, and he knew the Qur'an by heart. Whilst he was a

<sup>A</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vi, 17-8.

<sup>B</sup> Al-Isfahānī, v, 104.

<sup>D</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xiii, 22.

<sup>I</sup> The 'Iqd al-farīd has Zūnain. See Guidi, s.v. & 'Tunain'.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xv, 65-8. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 191.



youth he lost his father, and his mother having married the musician Siyyāt, the career of a singer soon attracted Ibn Jāmi'. Although his step-father was his first teacher, he also received lessons from Yahyā al-Makkī. When Siyyāt left Mecca for Baghdād and became a favourite at Al-Mahdī's court, Ibn Jāmi', and another of Siyyāt's pupils named Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī, were countenanced by the Khalif's sons Harūn and Al-Hādī. The Khalif however, fearing lest this liking for music by his heirs might offend the people, forbade these two young musicians to enter the princes' apartments. The instruction was ignored, and Ibn Jāmi' and Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī were arrested. The latter was sentenced to 300 strokes of the lash, whilst Ibn Jāmi', protesting his noble birth, was banished. "You", cried Al-Mahdī, "One of the Quraish, and following the profession of music! What a disgrace. Out of my sight. Leave Baghdād instantly".<sup>X</sup> Ibn Jāmi' fled to Mecca, but when the Khalif died and Al-Hādī came to the throne (785), Ibn Jāmi' was ~~was~~ sent for, and was presented with 30,000 pieces of gold. With this fortune, Ibn Jāmi' thought he would retire to Mecca, but through reckless living he fell on evil days, and once more took to professional work, making an appearance at the court of Harūn (786-809). Here he found his old fellow-pupil Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī, who was the chief court musician, and a bitter jealousy arose between them. Even the other court musicians took part in this, and divided themselves into two camps. There can be doubt that Ibn Jāmi' was a great performer, although inferior perhaps to his rival. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi says that "Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī was the greatest of the musicians in versatitliy, but Ibn Jāmi' had the sweetest note".<sup>H</sup> Barsūmā, a favoured court musician, was asked his opinion of Ibn Jāmi' by Harūn. The musician replied, - "Why not ask my opinion about honey?".<sup>K</sup> (Rabbihi, ii, 40.)

X. "Sovereigns are the Quraish" runs the tradition. Ibn 'Abd

H. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 179. ~~Abd Rabbihi~~

K. Ibid. Al-Isfahānī, vi, 12, 89-92.



Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī (d. 804) was the usual name given to Ibrāhīm ibn Māhān (or Maimūn)<sup>Z/</sup> al-Mausilī, who was born at Al-Kūfa in 742. He came of a noble Persian family, but was brought up by an illustrious man of the Banū ~~Ma~~ Tamīm. Running away from home, he settled at Mausil, which gave him his surname, & it was there that he took his first singing lessons. Later, he went to Raiy in Northern Persia, where he acquired a knowledge of both Persian and Arabian music (ghinā'). Here he met a representative of Khalif Al-Mansūr who enabled him to go to Basra to <sup>further</sup> prosecute his musical studies. <sup>X/</sup> Finally, he went to Baghdād, where he studied under Siyyāt.

We have already seen how he suffered on account of the sons of Al-Mahdī, and when the latter died, his successor Al-Hādī (785), repaid Ibrāhīm for this by a gift of 150,000 pieces of gold. With Hārūn (786-809), he was elevated to the foremost position among the court musicians, and became the "boon companion" of the Khalif, hence his nickname Al-Nadīm. <sup>W/</sup>

The rival camps of Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī and Ibn Jāmi' caused a great stir at court. Among the supporters of the former, were, - his son Ishāq, Zalzal, and Muḥammad al-Ziff (or Raff), whilst the latter had Mukhāriq and 'Aqīd among his adherents. On one occasion Ibrāhīm gained a signal victory. An audition was being held by Ibrāhīm in which some thirty singing-girls were playing their lutes, and Ibn Jāmi' complained that one of them was playing out of tune, whereupon Ibrāhīm immediately named the culprit, & actually mentioned the string that was out of tune. The court was

<sup>X/</sup> Anlwardt, Abū Nuwās.

<sup>W/</sup> See how he is respected in the Alf laila wa laila, iv, 232

<sup>Z/</sup> Māhān was his father's Iranian name, but the Arabs altered it to Maimūn.



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amazed, much to the chagrin of Ibn Jāmi'.

Ibrāhīm became extremely rich. Not only did he receive a court pension of 10,000 pieces of silver a month, but the liberalities of the Khalif and nobility almost pass credence. He derived a large income from his lands, and his music school brought him a total profit of twenty-four million pieces of silver. His mansion was the talk of Baghdād, and one person says, "A more spacious and nobler dwelling, I have never seen".<sup>W/</sup>

As a singer & instrumentalist, Ibrāhīm was without a peer.<sup>X/</sup> As a composer, he stood unrivalled, and no less than 900 compositions stood to his credit.<sup>WW/</sup> Ibn Khallikān credits him with the introduction of "several new modes".<sup>M/</sup> Other writers say that he was the first to make a name with the mākhūrī rhythmic mode.<sup>S/</sup> When the great musician was on his deathbed, Khalif Hārūn, was ever present, and at his funeral the prayers were recited by Al-Ma'mūn himself. Besides his son, Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī had several eminent pupils, and among them,-- Zalzal, Mukhāriq, 'Allawaya, Abū Sadaqa, Sulaim ibn Sallām, and Muḥammad ibn al-Hārith. The name of Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī has been made famous in the West as well as the East by the Thousand and One Nights.<sup>O/</sup>

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<sup>W/</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 188.

<sup>X/</sup> Ibn Khallikān, i, 21. Cf. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 188.

<sup>WW/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, v, 17. xviii, 176.

<sup>M/</sup> Ibn Khallikān, i, 21.

<sup>S/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vi, 66. Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 98.

<sup>O/</sup> Alf laila wa laila, iii, 388. This is his adventure with the Devil, told also by Al-Isfahānī, v, 36, and Al-Ghuzūlī, i, 241. His adventure with the singing-girls occurs in Al-Isfahānī, v, 41; Al-Ghuzūlī, i, 243; Ibn Badrūn, 272. In the Alf laila wa laila, ii, 437, it is told of his son Ishāq.

<sup>A/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, v, 2-48. Ibn Khallikān, i, 20. Al-Fihrist, 140.



Yazīd ~~MAUSILĪ~~ Haurā', Abū Khālīd, was a musician of Al-Medīna, and a freeman of the Banū Laith ibn Bakr. Settling in Baghdād, he made a reputation at the court of Al-Mandī (775). His voice was of an extraordinary quality, and Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī employed him at his music school, but it is said that Yazīd was unable to impart the secret of his vocalisation to his pupils. He excelled also as a composer, and both Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī and Ibn Jāmi' sang his compositions. Hārūn (786) was devoted to Yazīd, and on the deathbed of the latter, the Khalif never failed to send his chief eunuch to enquire each day after Yazīd. He was a personal friend of the poets Abū'l-'Atāhiya and Abū Mālik A'raj, and it was the latter who wrote the elegaic verses on his death. As an all-round musician, he is ranked with Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī and Ibn Jāmi'.<sup>X/</sup>

Zalzal, or Mansūr Zalzal al-Dārib,<sup>B/</sup> was a very important musician of the early 'Abbāsids. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi says of him, - "Zalzal was the most pleasant of the stringed instrumentalists, and there was not his equal either before or after".<sup>Z/</sup> Ishāq al-Mausilī testified at the court of Al-Wāthiq, that 'Zalzal had no peer as a lutenist'.<sup>D/</sup> He was the special accompanist of Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī, who was his brother-in-law, and teacher, and his forte was as an accompanist, since he did not sing much.<sup>S/</sup> He is better known in music/al history as a reformer of the scale, for it was he who introduced the famous neutral third ( 22:27 ).

<sup>X/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, iii, 73-5.

<sup>Z/</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 190. <sup>D/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, v, 57-8.

<sup>B/</sup> Carra de Vaux, Traité des rapports, 56, and De Merceval Mus. Arabes, 548, write Zolzol. But Al-Khwārizmī Mafātīh al-'ulūm, 239, indicates the pronunciation as above. Guidi writes Zilzil. See also, - Ibn Khallikān i, 21. Land, Recherches, 61. Von Hammer, Lit der Arab. iii, 764.

<sup>S/</sup> Cf. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 190.



He was also the inventor of a "perfect lute" called the ūd al-shabbūt. Unfortunately, he incurred the displeasure of Hārūn and he was flung into prison, where he languished for years. On his release, his beard was quite white, and his health was ruined. He died in 791. ~~FI~~ During his lifetime, Zalzal had a well dug at Baghdād, and at his death he left this to the people of the city, with sufficient funds to keep it in repair. For centuries it was known as the Birkat al-Zalzal.<sup>Q</sup>

Fulaih ibn Abī'l-'Aurā' was a native of Mecca, & a freeman of the Banū Makhzūm. He was a pupil of Yahyā al-Makkī, and was considered one of the chief singers at the court of Al-Mahdī (775), and he was the only musician (so it is said) who appeared before that Khalif without the customary curtain. He was one of the three musicians commissioned by Hārūn (786) to make a collection of ~~new~~ songs for him, his collaborators being Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī and Ibn Jāmi'. The collection was called "The Hundred Songs".<sup>S</sup> Ishāq al-Mausilī praises him as a singer.<sup>H</sup> Among his pupils were the songstresses Badhī and Danānir.<sup>W</sup>

Prince Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī, Abū Ishāq (779-839) was the younger brother of Hārūn but by another mother whose name was Shikla. Born at Baghdād, he received a very careful education, and his profound knowledge of the poets, the sciences, jurisprudence, dialectic, ~~and the~~ traditions, is commented on by the annalists. His abilities as a musician however, outshone all these accomplishments. Losing his father Al-Mahdī when six years of age, and being ~~was~~ confided to his mother's care, Ibrāhīm was nurtured in the harīm, where music played so large a part. His mother,

~~X~~ Al-Isfahānī, v, 22-4. ~~O~~ Le Strange, op.cit., 62.

~~S~~ Al-Isfahānī, iv, 98-101.

~~H~~ Al-Isfahānī, v, 9.

~~W~~ Al-Isfahānī, xv, 144. xvii, 77.



who came from Dailam, was a musician, and so was Maknūna<sup>a</sup> the ~~mother~~ mother of his stepsister 'Ulayya. So we find these two spoilt children being initiated very early into the mysteries of the musical art. Hārūn himself evinced extreme interest in the musical education of his brother and sister, & although it was not considered "good form" for a Muslim of any social standing to indulge in this profane art, yet Hārūn allowed them to perform <sup>before</sup> him, and was even delighted to see them competing with the court musicians. W.

When Al-Amīn became Khalif (809) he sent for his musical nephew Ibrāhīm, so that ~~his court~~ <sup>(might have the)</sup> ~~musical talents~~ <sup>of the latter</sup> added to it. On the accession of Al-Ma'mūn ~~whom~~ Ibrāhīm allowed himself to be proclaimed Khalif during the ~~Baghdād~~ <sup>(safety in)</sup> Baghdād rebellion of 817. The would-be Khalif sought ~~flight~~ <sup>flight</sup>, but apprehended, % he begged for his life at the feet of Al-Ma'mūn. It was granted him on condition that he became one of the court musicians. Previously, Ibrāhīm had sung in private at court, but now he had to stand with the other minstrels in front of the curtain. X. For a time however, musicians were banned at court, as we have seen. ~~W.~~

Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mandī eventually became the leader of the Persian Romantic ~~school~~ school in music, and through it there began an historic struggle between his school and that of Ishāq al-Mausilī who stood for the old Arabian traditional ~~music.~~ <sup>music.</sup> Ibrāhīm continued a favourite at court until the time of Al-Mu'tasim. Two of his sons, Yūsuf and HibatAllān, published biographical notices of their illustrious father. The former went out of his way to calumniate Ishāq al-Mausilī, his father's rival, an act justly condemned by

W. Both Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī and Ibn Jāmi' acknowledged the cleverness of the young prince. Al-Isfahānī, ix, 51.

X. Al-Isfahānī and the Arabian Nights, 274th Night (Burton), say that Prince Ibrāhīm was denounced by Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī. This can scarcely be correct, since the latter is said to have died several years earlier.

X. Al-Isfahānī, ix, 60-1.



Al-Isfahānī. The other son however, was a fount of information for the author of the Kitāb al-aghānī. Among the most notable pupils of Ibrāhīm were, - Muḥammad ibn al-Hārith and 'Amr ibn Bana.

Ibrāhīm had a magnificent & powerful voice,<sup>2/</sup> with a compass of three octaves.<sup>3/</sup> "No other singer in the world was capable of this feat" says Al-Isfahānī. As a theorist and instrumental performer he was of outstanding ability. Al-Isfahānī says, - "Ibrāhīm was one of the most proficient of mankind in the art of the notes (nagham), in the knowledge of the rhythms (iqā'āt), and in performing on stringed instruments". He even essayed to play the reed-pipe (mizmār) and the drum (tabl).<sup>2/</sup>

(d. ca. 845)

Mukhāriq, or Abū Muḥammad Mukhāriq ibn Yanyā,<sup>B/</sup> was born at Al-Medīnā (or Al-Kūfa) and was a slave to 'Atika bint Shudha, a famous songstress. From her, Mukhāriq received his first lessons in music, and being heard by Ishāq al-Mausilī one day, he was purchased for Fadl al-Barmakī, who passed him on to Hārūn. Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī took him as a pupil and Hārūn gave him his freedom. Soon after this he won great favour at court, was rewarded with 100,000 pieces of gold, and honoured with a seat by the side of Hārūn.<sup>A/</sup> Al-Amīn (808) had Mukhāriq at his court. One day <sup>while</sup> this capricious monarch was riding in his manège to the music of his military band of pipes (surnāyāt) and drums (tubūl), he commanded Mukhāriq to sing along with these instrumentalists. This was kept up continuously during the night, the Khalif being absolutely indifferent to the fatigue of this demand.<sup>X/</sup> Under Al-Ma'mūn (813)

2/ Al-Isfahānī, ix, 51, 72. Even Ishāq al-Mausilī acknowledged his talents. Al-Isfahānī, v, 119.

3/ Al-Isfahānī, ix, 51.

2/ Al-Isfahānī, xiv, 54. X/ Al-Isfahānī, viii, 20.

B/ Cf. Ibn Khallikān, i, 18. Kosegarten, Lib. Cant., 30. Von Hammer, Lit. der Arab., iii, 784.

X/ Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 138.



Al-Mu'tasim (833), and Al-Wathiq (842), he remained a favourite at court, and he appears to have died in 845. He was a close friend of the poet Abū'l-'Atāhiya, who, on his deathbed, sent for Mukhāriq, that he might hear the great singer intone those verses of his which had been set to Mukhāriq's music, beginning, - "When my life closes, the sorrow of women will be but short".<sup>W</sup> Ibn Taghrībirdī says in his Mujūm al-zāhira, that whilst Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī & his son Ishāq sang well to the accompaniment of the lute ('ūd), in pure vocal work, Mukhāriq outshone them both".

Muhammad ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Bushkannar Abū Ja'far<sup>I</sup> was of foreign extraction since his family came from Raiy. His father, who had been a judge (qādī) was fond of music, and was noted for his singing-girls.<sup>X</sup> At first, Muhammad contented himself with the "improvisation", but he became a pupil of Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī, and made such progress that we find him ~~was~~ playing the mi'zafa (<sup>? psalttery</sup> ~~musical instrument~~). Later he learned the lute ('ūd) under Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī. When Al-Ma'mūn pardoned Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī for his treachery in 819, he made him virtually a prisoner within the palace under the charge of the wazīr Muhammad ibn Mazdād, and the latter appointed Muhammad ibn al-Ḥārith to see that the prince did not break his parole. It was this musician who was able to persuade the Khalif to remove this irksome surveillance.<sup>M</sup> One day however, he sang some verses in praise of the Umayyads which so enraged the Khalif, that the ~~latter~~ <sup>latter</sup> ordered the imprudent musician to be beheaded, and it was with the utmost difficulty that the wazīr stayed his hand. Muhammad ibn al-Ḥārith appears to

<sup>W</sup>. Al-Isfahānī, xxi, 220-56.

<sup>I</sup>. Both the pūlāq and the Sāsī editions of Al-Isfahānī, have Bashkhīr or Shashkhīr, but the Tashīh has Bushkannar.

<sup>X</sup>. Al-Isfahānī, xx, 83.

<sup>M</sup>. Al-Isfahānī, ix, 61.



have lived to a ripe old age since we find him at the court of Al-Wāthiq (842).<sup>W</sup>

Abū Ṣadaqa, or Maskīn ibn Ṣadaqa, was a minstrel of Al-Medīna. Called to the court of Hārūn (786) he won a reputation as a story-teller as well as a musician. His talents are said to have been discovered by Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī. Historians say that he was particularly clever in the extemporization (iqṭarān) and in the rhythmic modes (īqā'at) <sup>earlier musicians</sup> which, like the ~~ancients~~, he marked with a qadīb. At a concert given before Hārūn, when most of the virtuosi were present, the khalif commanded that a certain song should be performed. None of the renditions pleased him until the sattār or "Guardian of the Curtain" commanded Abū Ṣadaqa to sing, when the khalif showered the most extravagant encomiums on this minstrel, and, drawing aside the curtain, listened to a story from the lips of Abū Ṣadaqa, concerning the origin of this particular song. His son Ṣadaqa ibn Abī Ṣadaqa, and his grandson Ahmad ibn Ṣadaqa ibn Abī Ṣadaqa, both became celebrated musicians.<sup>I</sup>

Allawaya al-A'ar Abū'l-Hasan 'Alī ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Saif, was a freeman of the House of Umayya. He belonged to Al-Medīna, and was the grandson of a musician named Saif, who lived in the days of Al-Walīd ibn 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān. He was taught music by Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī and became a skilful musician, well educated, and foremost among the instrumentalists. His first court appearance was with Hārūn (786), who, on one occasion, punished him.<sup>A</sup> With

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<sup>W</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, xx, 82. x, 161-4.  
<sup>I</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, xxi, 153-64. Al-Mas'ūdī, vi, 342-47.  
<sup>A</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, v, 45.

<sup>1</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, v, 106. <sup>2</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, vi, 106.  
<sup>3</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, v, 60, 64, 65. <sup>4</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, vi, 106.  
<sup>5</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, i, 2. <sup>6</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, vi, 106.  
<sup>7</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, x, 120-32. <sup>8</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, vi, 106.  
<sup>9</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, vi, 106.



Al-Amin (809) he was shown some partiality, although once again, punishment fell upon him. Al-Ma'mun (813) extended his patronage to 'Allawaya, and it was through the latter that Ishāq al-Mausilī was re-instated in the Khalif's good graces after a long estrangement. <sup>I.</sup> When the "Romantic School" of Prince Ibrāhīm became the craze, 'Allawaya joined his party, and he & Ishāq became enemies. <sup>B.</sup> When the Prince had gone the way of all flesh, these two virtuosi patched up their differences. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī blames 'Allawaya for the introduction of the Persian notes into Arabian music, <sup>@</sup> ~~and~~ it was this which eventually contributed to the loss of much of the classical music of Arabia. <sup>3.</sup> 'Allawaya died in the reign of Al-Mutawakkal (847-61). <sup>2.</sup>

Al-Zubair ibn Dahmān was a musician of Mecca, and a freeman of the Banū Laith ibn Bakr. His father was a well-known musician of the Umayyads. Although successful in commercial life, he became enamoured with music, & in the reign of Hārūn (786) he was called to court. Here, he took part in the rivalry between the factions of Prince Ibrāhīm and Ishāq al-Mausilī, both he and his brother 'Abdallāh, <sup>1.</sup> also a court musician, joining the former party. Ishāq however, paid a warm tribute to his talents, and Hārūn bestowed his favours. On one occasion, it was the <sup>musical</sup> setting of Al-Zubair ~~of~~ a prescribed piece of verse that carried off the prize of 20,000 pieces of silver, with twenty competitors. <sup>2.</sup> Among his pupils was the songstress / Qalam al-Sālahiyya. <sup>3.</sup> (767-850)

Ishāq al-Mausilī, or in full, - Abū Muḥammad Ishāq ibn Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī, became the chief court musician on the death of his father. Born at Raiy in 767, he came to

<sup>I.</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, v, 106. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī, iii, 188.

<sup>B.</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, v, 60, 64, 91. <sup>@</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī, iii, 188

<sup>3.</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, i, 2.

<sup>1.</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, xx, 144-5.

<sup>2.</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, x, 120-32.

<sup>2.</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, xvii, 73-8

<sup>3.</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, xii, 115.







robes, which were reserved for legists, and he even allowed him to assist in the Friday prayer from the tribune of the Khalif. Al-Wāthiq (842) ~~was a great musician~~ ~~and~~ said, - "Ishāq never yet sang to me but what I felt that my possessions were increased". When Ishāq died in 850, <sup>A</sup> from the results of the Ramaḍān fast, Al-Mutawakkal (847) said, - "With the death of Ishāq, my Empire is deprived of an ornament and a glory". ~~Written by his son Muḥammad.~~

As an all-round musician, Ishāq was the greatest musician that Islām had produced. Although his voice was probably not so good as some of his contemporaries, yet his absolute artistry gave him a decided superiority. As an instrumentalist he was supremo. As a theorist, he was able to lay down a theoretical system, "without having known a solitary book of the ancients (awā'il)", meaning the Greeks. As a littérateur, his library was one of the largest in Baghdād, and in Arabic lexicographical works alone, he possessed a thousand volumes. <sup>O</sup>

The Fihrist places nearly forty works to his pen, & in this work Ishāq is described as, - "a recorder of poetry and antiquities, .... a poet, clever in the art of singing, and versatile in the sciences". Among his musical books were, - Book of Songs sung by Ishāq, Book of Stories of 'Azza al-Mailā', Book of the Songs of Ma'bad, Book of Stories of Hunain al-Hirī, <sup>A</sup> Book of Stories of Tuwais, Book of Stories of Ibn Misjah, Book of Stories of Al-Dalāl, Book of Stories of Ibn 'A'isha, Book of Stories of Al-Abjar, Book of the Selected Songs of Al-Wāthiq, Book of Dancing (Kitāb al-raḡas wa'l-zafan), Book of Notes and Rhythm (K. al naghām wa'l-īqā'),

<sup>A</sup> Abū'l-Fidā' says 828.

<sup>O</sup> He allowed a pension to Ibn al-'Arabī the lexicographer.

<sup>A</sup> The text has al-Khīrī.



Book of the Singing-Girls of Al-Hijāz, Book of the Singing-Girls, Book of Stories of Ma'bad and Ibn Suraij and their Songs, Book of Stories of Al-gharīd, Grand Book of Songs. This last-named work, which became very popular, was not entirely from the pen of Ishāq, but a compilation by a bookseller named Sindī ibn 'Alī. Only the preface (rukhsa) was by Ishāq, the remaining material being selected from other works ~~of~~ Ishāq. ~~Biographies~~ of Ishāq al-Mausilī ~~were~~ written by his son Hammād, 'Alī ibn Yahyā ibn Abī Mansūr, and others. ~~W~~

Al-Khalīl ibn Ahmad (718-791), one of the famous scholars of the Basra school of Arabic philology, was perhaps the greatest musical theorist of his day. He is known as the compiler of the first Arabic lexicon, the Kitāb al-'Ain, and the systematiser of the rules of prosody. The story runs that he discovered these "rules" by hearing the sounds of a smith's hammer on an anvil. ~~M~~ His investigations into the science of music were made public in two works, - the kitāb al-nagham (Book of Notes), and the Kitāb al-īqā' (Book of Rhythm), and is ~~the~~ <sup>therefore</sup> the pioneer musical scientist of the Arabs. ~~B~~ Hamza ibn al-Hasan al-Isfahānī says of him: "Islām <sup>ism</sup> ~~never~~ produced a more active spirit than Al-khalīl for the discovery of the sciences which were unknown, ~~even in their first principles~~, to be learned by the Arabs". ~~H~~

Rābbihī, iii, 188.

- ~~W~~. Al-Isfahānī, v., 52-131. Al-Fihrist, 141-3. Ibn 'Abd
- ~~M~~. This is the old Pythagorean story. In the form given by Hajjī Khalīfa, vi, 255, it differs from Greek and Persian accounts. See Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Brit.Mus.MS., Or.2972, fol.154,v.
- ~~B~~. Al-Fihrist, 43.
- ~~H~~. Ibn Khallikān, I, 494.



Al-Kindī, whose full name was Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb ibn Ishāq al-Kindī (d. ca. 874) was an Arab of noble descent, and was born at Basra about 790. He rose to favour in the days of Al-Ma'mūn (813) and Al-Mu'tasim (833), but under the orthodox reaction under Al-Mutawakkal (847) his identification with the Mu'tazilites led to the confiscation of his library. Al-Kindī has been called "The Philosopher of the Arabs" by his own countrymen, since he seems to have been the first to have devoted special attention to natural phenomena from a rationalist standpoint. <sup>X</sup> He was a voluminous writer, and among his music books are a Kitāb risālat al-kubrī fī ta'līf (Grand Treatise on Composition), Kitāb risāla fī tartīb al-nagham (Treatise on the System of the Notes), Kitāb risāla fī'l-īqā' (Treatise on Rhythm), Kitāb risāla fī'l-madkhal ilā sinā'at al-mūsīqī (Treatise on the Introduction to the Art of Music), Kitāb risāla fī khubr sinā'at al-ta'līf (Treatise of Information on the Art of Composition), Kitāb risāla fī'l-akhbār 'an sinā'at al-mūsīqī (Treatise of Stories about the <sup>san'at</sup> ~~art~~ of Music in the Composition of the Notes and the <sup>art</sup> ~~skill~~ of the Lute). <sup>S</sup> ~~of the notes and the skill of the lute.~~

Three, if not four of these ~~works~~ works have come down to us, although their titles are slightly different. In the British Museum we have a Risāla fī khubr ta'līf al-alhān, <sup>1</sup> and the Berlin Library has a Risāla fī ijzā' khabarriya <sup>2</sup> and a Risāla fī'l-luhūn <sup>3</sup> ~~which~~ which may be al-mūsīqī identical with the last of the above named works. Another work in this library may also be by Al-Kindī. <sup>4</sup>

X. Steiner, Die Mu'taziliten, 15.

i, 210.

S. Al-Fihrist, i, 255-57. Ibn al-Qiftī, 370, Ibn Abī Usaibi'a.

I. Brit. Mus., Or. 2861.

2. Berlin MS., (Ahlwardt) 5503.

3. Berlin MS. (Ahlwardt), ~~5531~~ 5531.

4. Berlin MS., (Ahlwardt), 5530.



In the British Museum Ms., there is another work mentioned with the title, - Kitāb al-ʿAzm fī taʿlīf al-luhūn (Grand Book on the Composition of the Melodies). Al-Kindī's musical treatises had a fairly considerable influence on later writers, for two centuries at least.<sup>4/</sup>

The three brothers known as the Banū Mūsā, whose names were Muḥammad (d. 873), Aḥmad, and Al-Ḥasan, were the sons of Mūsā ibn Shākir, one of the first algebraists. They were among the most celebrated scholars of the day, and were at the Bait al-hikma at Baghdād contemporary with Yahyā ibn Abī Maṣṣūr (d. ca. 831). In the Fihrist we read that "their favourite sciences were geometry, mechanics, music, and astronomy". Ibn Khallikān also assures us that music & mechanics were among their accomplishments. Yet, not a solitary music book is mentioned under their names in the Fihrist, nor by Ibn al-Qiftī, unless the Kitāb al-urghānūn (Book on the Organ) mentioned in another part of the Fihrist in connection with them, is to be placed to their credit.<sup>1/</sup> Casiri mentions a Liber de Musica on their account, but the treatise corresponds with a Kitāb al-qarastūn, which has no concern with music.<sup>M/</sup> One musical work by the Banū Mūsā has fortunately survived. It is a treatise on automatic musical instruments, including the hydraulic organ. The MS is preserved at the Greek Orthodox College known as the Three Moons at Bairūt. The work is entitled Al-ālat illatī tuzammir binafsihā (The Instrument which Plays by Itself), the text of which has been published in the Mashriq.<sup>2/</sup>

<sup>4/</sup> Al-Husain ibn Zaila, Brit. Mus. Ms., 2361, fol. 229.

<sup>M/</sup> See Dozy, Suppl. Dict. Arabes. Suter, Math. Verz. im Fihrist, 20. Steinschneider, Die arab. Ueberset.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Fihrist, 271. Ibn Khallikān, iii, 315. Ibn al-Qiftī, 441. Casiri, i, 418. Al-Mashriq, xvi, 444.

<sup>1/</sup> al-Fihrist, 285.



'Abd al-Wannāb al-Ḥusain ibn Ja'far al-Ḥāḡib was one of the famous musicians of Al-Andalus at this period. Al-Maqqarī calls him "the unique one of his generation in pleasant music (ghinā'), delightful learning, fine poetry, and beautiful expression, .... the most capable of mankind in playing the lute ('ūd) and in the different 'modes' (tarā'iq) which were played on it, and in composing melodies (luḥūn). And often he would utter fine sentiments in beautiful verses, and mould them upon delightful melodies..... out of his own invention and cleverness". So great was his reputation, that no musician came from the East without first seeking to make his acquaintance, since he was recognised as "the one who attained the highest excellence in the profession". His bounty and hospitality to other musicians were proverbial, and although his income was quite a considerable one, he was frequently poor on account of his generosity.<sup>I/</sup>

Ziryāb <sup>was</sup> ~~the~~ the nickname of Abū'l-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Nāfi', given him "on account of his dark complexion and his eloquence of speech".<sup>(I)</sup> He was the most famous musician among the Western Arabs of Al-Andalus. We first notice him at Baghdād as a freeman of Al-Mahdī (775) and a pupil of Ishāq al-Mawṣilī, although he did not make his first appearance at court until the time of Hārūn (786), where his remarkable personality, quite apart from his musical talents, so struck the Khalif, that he was predicted as the coming master. At his first audition before Hārūn, he refused to play on the lute of his master Ishāq al-Mawṣilī, and insisted on using his own, which, he said, - "although equal in size and made of the same wood, is heavier by nearly one-third, with strings made of silk and not spun with hot water".<sup>M/</sup> ~~~~~~~ and third and third and fourth~~

(I) Ziryāb is also the name for a dark bird that has a sweet note. In Persian it stands for a solution of gold for gilding.

M/ Cf. the text in Al-Maqqarī.

I/ Al-Maqqarī, Analectes, 1, 119-20.



Ziryāb soon captured Hārūn's fancy, and this aroused the jealousy of Ishāq, who immediately gave Ziryāb to understand that he would not tolerate a rival at court and insisted on his leaving Baghdād. It would have been folly to have defied so eminent a man as Ishāq, and the young minstrel emigrated to Al-Magrib (North Africa) where he soon rose to fame. Whilst in the service of Ziyāda Allān I (816) the Aghlabid sultān of Qairawān near Tunis, he sang ~~==~~<sup>a</sup> song of 'Antara one day. It was the one beginning, - "If my mother were as plask as a crow", and the sultān was furious at this verse, and had Ziryāb whipped and banished. The musician then crossed the Mediterranean and entered Al-Andalus, ~~where~~ where the Sultān 'Abd al-Rahmān II (822) took him into his service. So says the author of the 'Iqd al-farīd.<sup>2/</sup>

Al-Maqqarī says that it was in the year 821 that Ziryāb landed at Algericas, and offered his services to Sultān Al-Hakam I (796-822) who immediately sent one of his court musicians, Al-Mansūr, to invite him to Cordova. Just then, Al-Hakam died, but his successor 'Abd al-Rahmān II, was equally anxious to obtain the minstrel's services, whose talents had be lauded by Yahyā al-Laithī, - "The prudent Andalusian". Great respect was paid Ziryāb during his journey to Cordova, and the ~~new~~ Sultān rode out of the city to meet him.<sup>3/</sup> For several months he was feted at the palace, and finally was lodged in a splendid mansion with a pension & emoluments amounting to 40,000 pieces ~~a~~<sup>8900</sup> a year.

Ziryāb soon eclipsed all other musicians in Al-Andalus. Al-Maqqarī says, - "Ziryāb was deeply versed in every

2/ Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī, iii, 189.

3/ Ibn Khaldūn, ii, 361.



branch of art connected with music, and was, moreover, gifted with such a prodigious memory that he knew by heart upwards of one thousand songs, with their appropriate airs: a greater number even than that recorded by ~~the~~ Ptolemy, who ~~(Mamun)~~ established rules on the science of music, and wrote upon it".  
Ziryāb, like many of the other musicians, believed that the jinn (genii) taught him his songs in the middle of the night. When thus inspired, he would call his two special singing-girls Ghazzālan and Hīnda, and bade them commit to memory the music ~~which~~ had come to him by these means.

Like Ishāq al-Mausilī, "he had a deep acquaintance with the various branches of literature polite. He was likewise learned in astronomy and in geography". Indeed, his knowledge was such that Al-Maqqarī says,—"There never was, either before or after him, a man of his profession who was more generally beloved and admired". He introduced plectra of eagles talons instead of those of wood, and added a fifth string to the lute.<sup>1/</sup> His greatest fame was his music school at Cordova which became the conservatory of Andalusian music,<sup>x/</sup> and its pupils were looked upon as one of the glories of the country.<sup>2/</sup> The date of Ziryāb's death is not recorded, but it is doubtful whether he lived later than the reign of Muḥammad (852-86). His sons and daughters became well-known musicians.

1/ Al-Maqqarī, Moh. Dyn., ii, 116-21.

x/ Al-Maqqarī, op. cit., ii, 117. Von Hammer, op. cit., iv, 727.

2/ Ibn Khaldūn, ii, 361.



*Revised Manuscript*

Al-Andalus had a few other well-known musicians who deserve mention.

'Alūn and Zarqūn were "the first of the musicians who entered Al-Andalus (from the East) in the days of Al-Hakam I (796-822) and they were maintained by him (at his court)". They became the most eminent of the virtuosi until the great Ziriyāb came and wrested the laurels from them. <sup>I/</sup>

'Abbās ibn <sup>al-</sup>Nasā'ī was the chief musician at ~~the~~ the court of Al-Hakam I, and he is mentioned as the ~~singer~~ singer of the songs composed by this Sultān.

Al-Mansūr was a Jewish musician who stood high in favour at the court of Al-Hakam I. It was he who was sent to conduct Ziriyāb to Cordova. <sup>W/</sup>

Bishāra al-Zāmīr was another musician "attached to the early kings", and Al-Maqqarī says that he came from the East, so that he was subsequent <sup>to,</sup> although contemporary with, 'Alūn and Zarqūn. He was "one of the cleverest of pipers". <sup>C/</sup>

~~Al-Jafarī, vi, 150.~~

~~Al-Jafarī, vi, 12-15.~~

~~Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, iii, 108.~~

~~Al-Jafarī, v, 34 vi, 12. Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, iii, 108.~~

~~Al-Jafarī, iii, 780, and Folio, vi, 12.~~

~~Al-Jafarī, iii, 780, and Folio, vi, 12.~~

<sup>I/</sup> Ibid.

<sup>W/</sup> Al-Maqqarī, Analectes, ii, 85.

<sup>C/</sup> Al-Maqqarī, Analectes, i, 119-20.



*in the Baghdad Khalifate*

Among the minor musicians of the period were the following, -

Muhammad ibn Hamza, Abū Ja'far, was a freeman of Al-Mansūr (754). He was a pupil of Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī and was counted "among the foremost of the singers, players, and story-tellers of the day". He was at the court of Hārūn<sup>1/</sup>.

Ismā'īl ibn al-Harbidh was a freeman of the Banū Zubair ibn al-'Awwām or the Banū Kināna, and he sang at the courts from the time of Al-Walīd II (743) to Hārūn (786)<sup>2/</sup>.

Sulaim ibn Sallām Abū 'Abdallāh belonged to Al-Kūfa, and was an intimate friend of Abū Muslim and Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī. He "possessed an excellent voice & a good appearance."<sup>3/</sup>

'Ibthar (?) al-Mughannī was another of the singers of Hārūn. He is described as "an ~~excellent~~ eloquent man, well educated, and withal, lofty in poetry, and possessing a beautiful voice."<sup>4/</sup>

Barṣumā al-Zāmīr was a pupil of Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī and a talented performer on the reed-pipe (mizmār). He seems to have been trusted as a critic of ~~the~~ contemporary musicians by Hārūn.<sup>5/</sup>

1/ Al-Isfahānī, v, 45. xvi, 226.

2/ Al-Isfahānī, vi, 150.

3/ Al-Isfahānī, vi, 12-15.

4/ Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī, iii, 188.

5/ Al-Isfahānī, v, 34. vi, 12. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī, iii, 188.

Von Hammer, Lit. der Arab., iii, 766, and Fétis, ii, 14, call him Jussūn.

6/ Al-Isfahānī, vi, 12. iii, 9.

7/ Al-Isfahānī, iii, 57. xvi, 226.

8/ Al-Isfahānī, xii, 169-70.

9/ Al-Isfahānī, xiv, 54.

10/ Al-Isfahānī, vi, 218. Al-Mas'ūdī, vi, 189. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī, iii, 188.

11/ Al-Isfahānī, xiii, 124-28.



Zunām was also a celebrated player on the reed-pipe, and he is mentioned in the 18th maqāma of Al-Ḥarīrī, as a celebrated musician. He was the inventor of a new kind of reed-pipe called the nāy zunāmī or nāy zulāmī as the Western Arabs misnamed it. He was at the courts of Ḥārūn, Al-Mu'tasim and Al-Wāthiq. <sup>M/</sup>

and 'Amr al-Ghazzāl, <sup>5/</sup> Al-Ḥusain ibn Muḥriz, <sup>6/</sup> and Muḥammad ibn Dā'ūd ibn Ismā'īl, <sup>7/</sup> were at Ḥārūn's court, whilst Ma'bad al-Yaqtīnī, <sup>A/</sup> Ja'far al-Ṭabbāl, <sup>B/</sup> and Abū Zakkār, <sup>C/</sup> were favoured minstrels of the Barmakid family.

The singing-girls and singstresses of the "Golden Age" were even <sup>e</sup> more famous than those of the Umayyad days, as we know from the pages of The Thousand and One Nights, although most of the names ~~mentioned~~ handed down in this entertaining work have no place in the Kitāb al-aghānī.

Al-Amī Basṣas ("Caress") was a half-caste singing-girl of Yahyā ibn Nafīs, famed for his concerts at Al-Medīna. Here, 'Abdallāh ibn Mus'ab heard Basṣas sing, which led him to compose verses specially for her. It was these verses which so charmed Khalif Al-Mansūr (754) that he learned them by heart. Ibn Khurdādhbih avers that Khalif Al-Mandī (775) bought Basṣas from Yahyā whilst he was an prince, for 17,000 pieces of gold. Whilst she was at Al-Medīna, she was the idol of the Quraish, and her beauty was praised by the poets. <sup>W/</sup>

<sup>I, 136.</sup> <sup>209.</sup>  
M/ Steingass, Assemblies of Ḥarīrī; Chenery, Assemblies of Ḥarīrī,  
Lane, Lexicon, sub voce.

5/ Al-Isfahānī, xi, 34. xx, 64.

6/ Al-Isfahānī, vi, 12. xiii, 9.

7/ Al-Isfahānī, iii, 57. xxi, 226.

A. A/ Al-Isfahānī, xii, 168-70.

B/ Al-Isfahānī, xiv, 54.

C/ Al-Isfahānī, vi, 212. Al-Mas'ūdī, vi, 359. Ibn Khallikān, <sup>(1, 317.)</sup>

W/ Al-Isfahānī, xiii, 114-18.



(d. 841)

'Uraib was a songstress who had a most extraordinary career, which ~~was~~ deserves recording, for it gives ~~an insight into social life of the period.~~ Handsome, accomplished as poetess, writer, and musician, she won a tremendous reputation. She "surpassed all the songstresses of Al-Hijāz and was particularly skilful in the art and science of the notes (naghām), and stringed instruments (awtār)". She is ranked with 'Azza al-Mailā' & Jamīla of old. Ishāq al-Mausilī said that he knew of no better performer on the lute ('ūd), nor a more gracious or artistic woman. She knew 21,500 melodies by heart !! Her first owner was 'Abdallāh ibn Ismā'il, Captain of the Galleys under Hārūn, but she fled with a lover to Baghdād. Here she sang in the public gardens, and <sup>being</sup> ~~was~~ recognized, ~~where~~ <sup>being</sup> was compelled to return to her master. She was then acquired by Al-Amīn (809) and at his death she reverted to her old master, but again fled with a lover, who married her. Al-Ma'mūn (813) then possessed her, and at his court she held a high place as a musician. Under Al-Mu'tasim (833) she was still captivating all hearts, and Al-Wāthiq, when he was a prince, tried to rival her compositions. She died in 841. Al-Mu'tamid (870) ordered a collection of her songs to be made. I/

'Ubaida, surnamed Al-Tunbūriyya, was "one of the best of the songstresses and the foremost of them in art and literature". Ishāq al-Mausilī said, - "In the art of tunbūr playing, anyone who seeks to go beyond 'Ubaida makes mere noise". Jahza al-Barmakī, the historian of the

Al-Isfahānī, xviii, 175-91.



tunbūrists remarked that 'Upaida was "an excellent musician and a remarkable virtuoso". She received her first lessons from a certain Zubaidī al-Tunbūrī, who used to stay at her father's house. On her parents' death, she became a public singer, visiting the houses of all and sundry for a few coins. She was then acquired by a certain 'Alī ibn al-Faraj al-Zajhī, by whom she had a daughter. Divorced, she entered the household of a cadet of the family of Ḥamza ibn Mālik, himself a good singer and a performer on the miḥzafa. Her cleverness as an instrumentalist was generally acknowledged. At a concert given in the presence of the most celebrated tunbūrist of his day, Masdūd, the latter refused to play in front of "a mistress of the musical art" like 'Upaida. Jaḥza al-Barmakī possessed her tunbūr, and underneath the neck of the instrument was written, - "In love, one can endure almost anything, except faithlessness". It had been given her by Ja'far ibn al-Ma'mūn. 'Upaida seems to have been true only to her art. <sup>W/</sup>

<sup>al-</sup> Shāriya was a native of ~~Basra~~, her father belonging to the Banū Sāma ibn Lawwī, and her mother to the Banū Zuhra a branch of the Quraish. In spite of her origin, she was put up for the highest bidder by her mother, and was purchased by Prince Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī. He had her taught by the best singing-girls of his harīm, including the famous Raiq ("Bloom of Youth"), and he then made her a present to his daughter Maimūna. The Prince afterwards freed her, and made her his wife. Al-Mu'tasim (833) was annoyed at this, but Ibrāhīm argued that she was one of the Quraish. On the death of Ibrāhīm she entered the harīm of Al-Mu'tasim and



remained at court under successive Khalifs. Muhammad ibn al-Hārith, asked his opinion of the respective merits of Prince Ibrāhīm and Shāriya, awarded the palm to the latter. One of her best pupils was Farīda.<sup>W/</sup> ~~Book of Choice Songs.~~ She refused to ~~Badhl~~ ("Gift") was a songstress of Al-Medīna who flourished at the courts from Al-Amin (809) to Al-Mustasim (833). She first belonged to Ja'far ibn al-Hādī, but Al-Amin having heard her sing, begged his cousin to sell her, but Ja'far replied, - "Men of my rank do not sell their slaves". Finally, Al-Amin obtained her. She was an accomplished musician, and Fulain ibn Abī'l-'Aurā' was one of her teachers. She had a prodigious memory & claimed to know 30,000 songs. So great was her knowledge of the songs, that even Ishāq al-Mausilī stood abashed. Abū Hashīna, the musical biographer says that in the time of Al-Ma'mūn (813) she composed a kitāb al-aghānī (Book of Songs) of some 12,000 specimens, for 'Alī ibn Hishām. This brought her 10,000 pieces of silver. She left a large fortune.<sup>X/</sup> Among her pupils were Danānīr<sup>E/</sup> and Mutayyim al-Hāshimiyya.<sup>2/</sup> Danānīr ("Wealth") was a slave of a man of Al-Medīna who sold her to Yahyā ibn Khālīd ~~and~~ al-Barmakī, who set her free. She was well educated, and famous for her accomplishments in poetry and song. Among her teachers

<sup>W/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xiv, 109-14.

<sup>X/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xv, 144-47.

<sup>E/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 136.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vii, 31-38.



were Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī, Ishāq al-Mausilī, Fulaih, Ibn Jāmi', and Badhl. She sang before Hārūn (786). ~~was a great favourite~~

~~was a great favourite~~ She was the authoress of a Kitāb mujarrad al-aghānī (Book of Choice Songs).<sup>M</sup> She refused to marry the court musician 'Aqīl on the grounds that she could not ally herself with a second-rate performer.<sup>I</sup>

'Atika bint Shudha was the daughter of Shudha the famous songstress at ~~was a great favourite~~ the court of Al-Walīd II (743). Like her mother, she was an excellent singer, and Yahyā ibn 'Alī ibn Yahyā, the musical theorist, said that she was one of the best of people in singing. At the court of Hārūn (786) she was a great favourite, and among her pupils were Ishāq al-Mausilī and Mukhāriq.<sup>H</sup>

Mutayyim ("Enslaving") al-Hashimiyya was a freewoman of Basra, where she lived all her life. Taught by Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī and his son Ishāq, and Badhl, she became a well known singer and poetess. She was acquired by ~~was a great favourite~~ 'Alī ibn

~~was a great favourite~~ Hishām, and became the mother of his children. ~~was a great favourite~~ Both Al-Ma'mūn and Al-Mu'tasim had heard her sing.<sup>H</sup> (Ṣāliḥ ibn /

Qalam al-Ṣālihiyya was a singing-girl of 'Abd al-Wahhāb. She was counted "a clever singer & performer", and was bought from this man by Al-Wāthiq (842) for 10,000 pieces of gold.<sup>I</sup>

Dhāt al-Khāl ("Mistress of the Beauty Spot") was originally purchased by Hārūn (786) for 70,000 pieces of silver, but was afterwards given to his favourite slave Hammawaihi in marriage. On her husband's death she re-entered the harīm of Hārūn, and she was one of the three favourites that the poets sang about, the other two being Sihr ("Charm") and Diyā' ("Splendour").<sup>S</sup>

<sup>I</sup>. Not 'Aqīl as in Von Hammer and Fétis.

<sup>M</sup>. Al-Isfahānī, xvi, 136-9. <sup>H</sup>. Al-Isfahānī, vii, 51-8.

<sup>I</sup>. Al-Isfahānī, xii, 115-17.

<sup>S</sup>. Al-Isfahānī, xv, 79, 80.



In Al-Andalus there were some famous songstresses.

‘Afzā’ was the favoured singing-girl of ‘Abd al-Rahmān I (756-88). She was purchased in the Orient, and was considered "the most excellent of people in music (ghinā)".

Faḍl was originally in the service of a daughter of khalif Hārūn at Baghdād, but later went to Al-Medīna, and from there she journeyed with a companion ‘Alam, to Al-Andalus, & became famous at the court of ‘Abd al-Rahmān II (822-52). We are told that she "excelled in music (ghinā)".

Qalam was <sup>a Biscayan</sup> ~~another~~ songstress ~~from Al-Medīna~~ who was

obtained by ‘Abd al-Rahmān II. She is spoken of as an excellent scribe, historian of poetry, reciter of stories, well versed in the various forms of polite literature, & "devoted to music (al-Samā)".

1/ Al Maqqarī, Analestes, ii, 97-8. Aghānī, xx, 148, 149.

2/ Al-Maqqarī, Analestes, ii, 96.

3/ Ibid., i, 225.



'Inān was another singer who captivated Hārūn. She was a singing-girl of a certain Al-Nāṭifī. One day, after the Khalif had heard one of her verses recited by a court minstrel, <sup>he asked</sup> ~~he asked~~ her master for her, for which traffic <sup>the latter</sup> ~~he~~ received 30,000 pieces of gold.<sup>H/</sup> Al-Aṣma'ī said that Hārūn was never more infatuated with anyone more than 'Inān.<sup>M/</sup>

Muṣābiḥ was a singing-girl of Abū Ḥafṣ 'Umar ibn Qalhīl of Al-Andalus. In music she is said to have reached "the highest point of excellence and skill, together with sweetness of voice". Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī has a poem in her honour. She was a pupil of Ziryāb.<sup>MM/</sup>

Mutā<sup>so</sup> was another pupil of Ziryāb, and when she grew up she <sup>so</sup> ~~captivated~~ the Sultān 'Abd al-Raḥmān II (822) ~~and that~~ Ziryāb presented her to him.<sup>W/</sup>

Other singing-girls of passing note were, Ḥaṣana,<sup>2/</sup> Raiq,<sup>5/</sup> Daman,<sup>3/</sup> Wahba,<sup>4/</sup> Dufāq,<sup>6/</sup> Samḥa,<sup>7/</sup> and Qumriyya.<sup>8/</sup>

<sup>H/</sup> Cf Von Hammer.

<sup>M/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, x, 101.xx, 76. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 199.

<sup>MM/</sup> Al-Maqqarī, Analectes, ii, 190.

<sup>W/</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xii, 108.

<sup>5/</sup> Al Isfahānī, iii, 184.

<sup>3/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, v, 58-9.

<sup>4/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xiii, 126.

<sup>6/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xi, 98-100. Von Hammer & Fétis write Duqāq.

<sup>7/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, iii, 115.

<sup>8/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, vi, 17.



## CHAPTER VI.

### The 'Abbāsids.

#### The First Decline.

(847-945)

By this time, the Khalifate had begun to reveal signs of serious decline. ~~political~~ political. One of the causes of this decay was the rise of the Turkish mercenary<sup>ies</sup>, who played a part in the history of the Khalifate similar to that of the Praetorian guards in the Roman decline. They had been brought to Baghdād by Al-Ma'mūn to counter-balance the influence of the Khurāsānī soldiery,<sup>I</sup> and by the time of Al-Mu'tasim (833) the entire <sup>standing army</sup> ~~army~~ of the Khalif comprised these mercenaries, the Arabs, both officers and men, who had been displaced, retiring to their tribes, where they were to become<sup>a</sup> "a chronic element of disturbance & revolt".<sup>X</sup> The Turks, whose numbers were ever on the increase, soon became masters of the Khalifate, and from the accession of Al-Mu'tazz (862) to the coming of the Buwaihids (945) the very succession to the khalifate was determined by these people.<sup>M</sup> There can be little doubt that the domination of these mercenaries contributed seriously to the decline of Arabian polity in the East..

Side by side with this military tyranny and political decadence, there was a revival of a bigoted orthodoxy in Islām, which brought about a corresponding intellectual and artistic retrogression, which played no small part in the general decline. The first century of 'Abbāsīd rule, as

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<sup>I</sup> Muir, Caliphate, 511.

<sup>X</sup> Muir, op.cit., 513.

<sup>M</sup> Muir, op.cit., 531.



2.

the day, with the raising of the guanoes (1945), was a  
product of economic policy, with the introduction of

Aghlabids (800-909) set up their ~~kingdom~~ <sup>kingdom</sup> at Qairawān (Tunisia), who, in turn, ~~we~~ <sup>re</sup> succeeded by the Fāṭimids (909-1171). In Egypt, ~~the~~ <sup>9 Syria</sup> Tūlūnids (868-905) took control, and although for a brief interval the Khalifs were able to assert their authority, the Ikhshīdids (935-969) ~~was~~ assumed dominion over Egypt & Syria. In the East, matters were almost as bad, for the various provinces, - Khurāsān, Tabaristān, Persia, Transoxiana, and Jurjān, had become ~~be~~ <sup>o</sup> practically independent, making a mere nominal acknowledgement to the Khalif, under the Tāhirids (820-72), 'Alīds (864-928)



Saffārids (868-903), Sāmānids (874-999), and the Ziyārids (928-976). Nearer home, 'Uman had long since acknowledged its own imām. Al-Yaman claimed its own rulers in the Ziyādids (819-1018) of Zabīd, and the Ya'furids (861-956) of Sa'ā, whilst the ~~Hamdanids (929-1003) ruled Syria and Mesopotamia.~~ By the <sup>end</sup> of the period under consideration, all that was left to the Khalifate, save nominal allegiance, was the capital, and even here, as Muir remarks, how little was the authority of the Khalif. Still, he was the spiritual head of this loosely held empire, and Baghdād was the centre of Islāmic culture in the East, although it is Cordova that counts for the West.

## (I)

Al-Mutawakkal (847), the first Khalif of the decline, opened his reign with an official return to orthodoxy, and Ahmad ibn Hanbal, the founder of the narrowest & least spiritual of the four orthodox sects,<sup>2/</sup> became the chief theologian. Then began the terrors of an inquisition, details of which may be read in Al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Athīr. The philosopher & music-theorist Al-Kindī, had his library confiscated, whilst the renowned physician Bōkht-Yishū', was despoiled of his possessions and was banished. It is not surprising therefore "how comparatively small is the number of writers & scholars of eminence who flourished in Al-Mutawakkal's time".

Among the few musical writers were Al-Kindī and Ibn Khurdādhbih. Music, strange to say, was scarcely interfered with, for the Khalif was a great lover of the art, and gave constant

<sup>2/</sup> Browne, Lit. Hist. of Persia, i, 344.



public encouragement to its professors, as even some of the best Khalifs of the "Golden Age".<sup>3/</sup> His son Abū 'Īsā 'Abdallāh was an accomplished musician who composed some three hundred songs.<sup>X/</sup> His wazīr Muḥammad ibn Fadl al-Jarjārā'ī was also "celebrated for his musical talents".<sup>4/</sup>

The Khalif built a gorgeous palace away from Sāmarrā (now the official residence of the Khalif & the Turkish soldiery) which he called after himself the Ja'fariyya. It was "crowded with every means of enjoyment, music, song, and gay divertissement".<sup>I/</sup> Here the Khalif encouraged the virtuosi, - Ishāq al-Mausilī, Aḥmad ibn Yahyā al-Makkī, Muḥammad ibn al-Hārith, 'Amr ibn Bānā, 'Abdallāh ibn al-'Abbās ibn al-Fadl al-Rabī'ī, Aḥmad ibn Ṣadaqa, 'Ath'ath al-Aswād, Al-Ḥasan al-Masūd, and Ibn al-Māriqī, as well as the songstresses 'Uraib, Shāriya, Farīda, and his favourite Maḥbūba. He was most generous to them all,<sup>2/</sup> but, as Muir says, it "makes but sorry amends for a life of cruel tyranny, bigotry, and self-indulgence".<sup>3/</sup>

Al-Muntasir (861) had but a short reign. He was both a poet and musician, and the words of his songs have been preserved in the Kitāb al-aghānī, where a chapter is devoted to him.<sup>X/</sup> His favourite minstrel at court was Bunān ibn 'Amr (al-Hārith) who sang his compositions. Another was Al-Ḥasan al-Masūd. We read of his singing-girls in the Murūj al-dhahab of Al-Mas'ūdī.<sup>5/</sup>

<sup>3/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, vi, 191.

<sup>4/</sup> Al-Fakhrī, 413.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, vii, 276.

<sup>X/</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, viii, 175-8.

~~Al-Mas'ūdī, vii, 297.~~

<sup>X/</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, ix, 104.

<sup>I/</sup> Muir, 528. Cf. Al-Mas'ūdī vii, 192.

<sup>3/</sup> Muir, 530.

<sup>5/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, vii, 297.



Al-Musta'in (862) has left no record of his musical tastes. One of his governors however, Muhammad ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Tāhir (d. 867) was a great patron of music. One day he was asked by Abū'l-'Abbās al-Makkī, just before a concert, what he considered was the best music (samā'). He replied,—"The best music is that of the four strings (i.e. the lute) when it ~~unaccompanied~~ accompanies a good song rendered by a perfect voice". <sup>M/</sup>

Al-Mu'tazz (866) was also a musician and poet, as we know from the Kitāb al-aghānī which registers some of his songs. <sup>1/</sup> Among his favourite minstrels were,—Bunān ibn 'Amr (al-Hārith) and Sulaimān ibn al-Qaṣṣār, the latter a fine tunbūrist. Shāriya and Jahā'ī were two of his special songstresses. His son 'Abdallāh, <sup>2/</sup> ~~was~~ a most accomplished musician, ~~who~~ took part in the musical discussions at the court of Al-Wāthiq. <sup>3/</sup> ~~He~~ This Prince wrote a book on Shāriya, and a Kitāb al-badī' (Book of Poetics) the first treatise of its kind. <sup>4/</sup> ~~He~~ He was called to the throne in 908 on the death of Al-Muqtadī, but was murdered the same day by the partisans of Al-Muqtadir.

Al-Muhtadī (869) was the son of the artistic Al-Wāthiq, but he inherited neither his father's culture nor his toleration. He took the pious Umayyad Khalif 'Umar II as his model, and the court was soon transformed. First, he placed an interdict on music. <sup>5/</sup> "Singing-girls and musicians were expelled; beasts in the menagerie slaughtered, and hounds turned adrift; ... wine and games proscribed; and

<sup>M/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, vii, 647.

<sup>1/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 175.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, ix, 140.

<sup>3/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, v, 97.

<sup>4/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xiv, 109.

<sup>5/</sup> Al-Fakhrī, 427.



a frugal household", were his reforms. <sup>0/</sup> It mattered little, for he was murdered ~~by his four predecessors~~ <sup>as</sup> were his four predecessors. ✱

Al-Mu'tamid (870), under the impulsion of his brother Al-Muwaffaq, was the first of the Khalifs of the decline, to attempt to stem the tyranny of the Turkish faction. The removal of the court back to Baghdād helped in this to some extent. The Khalif was a musician himself, and he brought the musicians & singing-girls back to the court, now held in the Ma'mūnī palace, or as it was now called, the Ḥasanī, so eloquently described by Yāqūt. <sup>S/</sup>

This Khalif says Al-Mas'ūdī, was appassioned <sup>S/</sup> for musical instruments (malāhī). Ibn Khurdādhbih, the geographer and writer on music, was favoured by him, and it is to his oration on music before this Khalif that we owe much of our knowledge of the early music of the Arabs, <sup>I/</sup> and to a songstress of his court for a description of the dances and dance rhythms of the day. <sup>2/</sup> Among the new comers of the virtuosi was Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Yahyā al-Makki. Shāriya too was still in favour at court. <sup>3/</sup> It was Al-Mu'tamid who commanded <sup>d</sup> that a collection of the songs of 'Uraib be made. <sup>W/</sup> One of his own songs in the khafīf thaḡīl rhythm, set to the words of Al-Farazdaq, is given by Al-Isfahānī. <sup>4/</sup>

Al-Mu'tadid (892), although an orthodox bigot, favoured music. When he was a prince he was noted for his marvellous voice. <sup>A/</sup> He had 'Upaidallāh ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Tāhir as his "boon companion", and this latter was the author of

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0/ Muir, 539. ✱ *Al-Muntashir however, may have died a natural death*  
<sup>S/</sup> Yāqūt, i, 806-9.

<sup>I/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 88-99.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 100.

~~by his four predecessors~~

<sup>3/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xiv, 113-4.

<sup>W/</sup> Al-Isfahānī,

<sup>4/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 186.

<sup>A/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 196.



fi'l-

a Kitāb ~~al-~~<sup>fi'l-</sup>-nagham (Book of Notes).<sup>2/</sup> He anathematized all who even mentioned the name of the Umayyads in ordinary public affairs, yet he would listen for hours to a song by the Umayyad, Khalif Al-Walīd II, when sung by his favourite minstrel Ahmad ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Abī'l-'Alā.<sup>4/</sup> At the same time, he had the philosopher & music thebrist Al-Sarakhsī put to death for a political offence.<sup>5/</sup> Al-Mu'tadid held splendid courts at the Firdaus and the Thurayyā palaces. These were built by him, whilst he laid the foundations of a third, - the Tāj.

Al-Muktafī (902) was the son of the preceding. We know nothing of his musical preferences save that 'Ubadallāh ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Tāhir still continued to be <sup>one of</sup> the "boon companions",<sup>x</sup> an honour shared with another musical theorist, - Yahyā ibn 'Alī ibn Yahyā ibn Abī Mansūr. The Baghdād hospital at this time was under the direction of the famous <sup>Abū Ḥammad ibn Zakariyyā</sup> Abū Bakr al-Rāzī who was also a music theorist. Under this Khalif the Empire became more secure than it had been for many years.

Al-Muqtadir (908) was but "a weak voluptuary in the hands of women of the court and their favourites".<sup>W/</sup> Baghdād was still in the hands of the Turkish soldiery, who held the Khalif at their mercy, whilst the orthodox party terrorized all and sundry who disagreed from their opinions.<sup>M/</sup> <sup>Yet</sup> the Khalif maintained splendid courts at his new palaces, the Shajara & the Muḥdith, and possessed no fewer than 11,000 eunuchs.<sup>A/</sup> Spending his days and nights with musicians and slave-girls,<sup>I/</sup> he made no attempt to check the excesses of the soldiery or the theologians, with the result that he left a legacy of anarchy to his successors. Miskawaini says that he "avoided

2/ Al-Isfahānī, viii, 44, 54.

I/ Muir, 566.

4/ Al-Isfahānī, viii, 88.

5/ Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 179.

X/ Al-Isfahānī, viii, 54.

W/ Muir, 565.

M/ Muir, 567-8.

A/ Al-Fakhrī, 449.



male companions - even minstrels." ~~On the~~ <sup>0/</sup> On the other hand, Al-Isfahānī names several minstrels at his court and among them, - Janḥa al-Barmakī, Ibrāhīm ibn Abī'l-'Uḥais, Ibrāhīm ibn al-Qāsim ibn Zurzūr, Waṣīf al-Zāmir, and Kanīz. <sup>2/</sup> Ṣalīfa was one of his favoured singing-girls.

Al-Qāhir (932), Al-Rādī (934), Al-Muttaqī (940), and Al-Mustakfī (944-46) were the next Khalifs. Little need be said of them. Mere puppets in the hands of Turkish soldiery, worse even than their predecessors, they wielded little or no authority. Their elevation to the throne depended entirely upon the whims of the mercenaries. Three of these Khalifs were deposed by them and were blinded. Al-Rādī, the only one who died as Khalif, is generally spoken of as "the last of the real Khalifs", i.e., the last to deliver the Friday orations, and to conduct the affairs of state like the Khalifs of old. He was also the last Khalif whose poetry has been preserved. <sup>3/</sup>

Yet in spite of these trials & tribulations, music still flourished at the courts. <sup>4/</sup> Al-Qāhir made a show of "orthodoxy", and forbade wine, the male musicians, the songstresses, and the mukhannathūn. These were all arrested and sent to ~~al-~~ Basra and ~~al-~~ Kufa. At the same time, Al-Qāhir indulged in music, and had as many singing-girls as he liked. <sup>0/</sup> A saying of Al-Rādī's wazīr Ibn Muqla, reveals the temper of the period. He says, - I like the man who cultivates poetry for self-instruction, not for lucre, and the man who practises music for pleasure, not for gain". (Ibn Khallikān).

~~The coming of the Turks in 935 put an end to the~~  
~~career of the Turkish soldiery. In the place of the~~  
~~one lordship of the Empire remained~~

<sup>0/</sup> Miskawaini, i, 13.      <sup>2/</sup> Al-Isfahani, v, 22.

<sup>3/</sup> Al-Fakhrī, 484. Muir, 571.      <sup>4/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xv, 99.

<sup>0/</sup> Miskawaini, i, 269.



So far, the musical culture of the Khalifate court at Baghād. Yet we cannot ignore the influence of the many independent dynasties, "whose courts often became foci for learning and literature, more apt in many ways to discover & stimulate local talent than a distant and unsympathetic metropolis".<sup>I</sup> It was the Sāmānids who protected the scientist and musical theorist Muḥammad ibn Zakariyyā al-Rāzī (the celebrated Rhazes) and the later Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), as well as the minstrel Rūdakī, who is often claimed as the first Persian poet. It was the Ḥamdānids who patronized the great philosopher and music theorist Al-Fārābī, and in whose dominions there lived Al-Isfahānī and Al-Mas'ūdī, the musical historians.

More important still was the culture influence of Al-Andalus in the West. Here, rulers were equally anxious to patronize music. During the reigns of Muḥammad I (852), Al-Mundhir (886), and 'Abdallāh (888), we see the arts flourish-ing.<sup>X</sup> At the same time, independent dynasties had sprung up in Al-Andalus as in the East. These petty chiefs, who gave mere nominal allegiance to the Sulṭān at Cordova, vied with each other not only for temporal supremacy, but for artistic and intellectual superiority. Music schools were opened in rivalry with that of Cordova, at Seville, Granada, ~~Warrington~~, and Toledo.<sup>B</sup> The amīr of Cazlona, 'Ubaidallāh ibn Umayya, was distinguished for his patronage of minstrelsy and the arts, ~~Warrington~~ Ibrāhīm ibn Ḥajjāj, who ruled Seville, was the envy of the land on account of his poets & musicians,

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<sup>I</sup>. Browne, Lit. Hist. of Persia, i, 339-40.

<sup>X</sup>. Casiri, ii, 34.

<sup>B</sup>. Soriano Fuertes, I, 81.



whilst the name of one of his songstresses, Al-Qamar, became famous throughout Al-Andalus.

The next Sultān of Cordova, 'Abd al-Rahmān III (912), put an end to the independence of the petty kingdoms, and brought all of them to acknowledge the central authority of Cordova. His reign is cited as the most illustrious in the history of Al-Andalus,<sup>W</sup> and he was the first of its rulers to adopt the title of Khalif. Both Dozy and Stanley Lane-Poole speak highly of the social and intellectual condition of the country, and of Cordova the capital, under his rule. "Except perhaps Byzantium, no city in Europe could compare with Cordova in the beauty of her buildings, the luxury and refinement of her life, and the learning and accomplishments of her inhabitants".<sup>M</sup> This western khalif was probably the richest man of the time, and in 951, the imperial treasury held twenty million pieces of gold. The most distinguished musicians that were to be found played at his concerts in the wonderful ~~golden~~ pavilion of gold in his palace of Al-Zahrā, the splendours of which are the delight of Arab historians.<sup>5</sup> Marvellous are the accounts "that have come down to us of the universality of the art (of music) among the people at large".<sup>E</sup> The famous court poet was Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, whose interesting 'Iqd al-farīd (The Unique Necklace) has been freely drawn upon in these pages.

<sup>W</sup>. Casiri, ii, 37.

[iii, 90.]

<sup>M</sup>. S. Lane-Poole, Moors in Spain, 129. Dozy, Hist. des musul.

<sup>5</sup>. S. Lane-Poole, op. cit., 139.

<sup>E</sup>. Rowbotham, iii, 562.



(2)

which is a diatribe against music, he argues in effect that all dissipation begins with music and ends in drunkenness.

We now come to a period when alien influences show themselves in Arabian music. Ever since the accession of the 'Abbāsids (750), Persian influences, especially those of Khurāsān, ~~Khurāsān~~ <sup>were</sup> traceable in the general culture. The rise of the Sāmānids further east, exercised a further weight in the balance in favour of Iranian art. From the opening of the "Decline" (847), Turkish ideas <sup>also</sup> found acceptance in Al-'Irāq, and with the supremacy of the Tulūnids (867) these were extended to Egypt. More important was the impression created by the translations made of the ancient Greek writers on music. How far all this culture flux changed the course of Arabian music, we shall see.

During the <sup>opening</sup> ~~beginning~~ of this period, ~~science and philosophy~~ science and philosophy were proscribed. Scientists were punished, libraries were seized, and book-sellers forbidden to sell anything but orthodox literature. Music alone escaped the fury of the bigots, and only one of the Khalifs had either the courage or the inclination to hurl anathema at it, and this was Al-Muhtadī. The theologians, it would appear, dared not interfere much with the pleasures of the court and the Turkish officers. It would have been almost as futile as asking them not to breathe as to suggest that they should not indulge in music. However, the tendency of the age is well expressed in the literature of Abū Bakr ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Abī'l-Dunyā (823-94), the tutor of Al-Muktafī. In his Dhamm al-malāhī (Disapprobation of Musical Instruments)



which is a diatribe against music, he argues in effect that all dissipation begins with music and ends in drunkenness. ~~A. Soon~~ ~~indeed,~~ ~~a veritable school of puritans arose who put forth~~ ~~quite a library of literature on this question as to whether~~ ~~listening to music was "lawful" or not.~~ On the whole however, most of their threatenings went for naught, for indeed, there was a far more interesting debate in progress as will now appear.

In the days of Hārūn (876-809) the court musicians were divided into two hostile camps, led by Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī and Ibn Jāmi' respectively. On the death of these virtuosi, we find Ishāq al-Mausilī and Prince Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī, leading rival cliques at court. Both of these movements had their origin in the jealousy aroused by the unique position held by the Mausilī family at court. In the second case however, it developed into an epic struggle between a Classic and Romantic school. Ibrāhīm, the son and brother of Khalifs, and indeed, an anti-khalif himself for a time, was a spoilt child. Petted and pampered by all he came in contact with, he became a consummate egotist. Al-Isfahānī says, - "In spite of his natural gifts and eminent merits, he would not conform to the proper interpretation of the ancient songs, but would suppress notes and alter passages just as he thought fit, and when reproved for this would answer, - 'I am a king, and the son of a king; I sing just as the whim of my fancy takes me'. He was the first musician who introduces licences into the ancient song". The result of this independent attitude was that a crowd of dilettanti, ever enthusiastic for

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A. Ahlwardt, Verzeichniss, No. 5504. See Hajjī Khalīfā, No. 5824.

~~A. The very names of the rhythmic notes had been altered, as we know from 'Amr ibn Mānī, one of the supporters of Prince Ibrāhīm. He speaks of the ṣaḥāb and ṣaḥāb ṭāhī instead of the ṣaḥāb (or ṣaḥāb ṭāhī) and ṣaḥāb ṭāhī.~~



innovations, as well as a considerable number of ~~the~~ virtuosi, set out to defy all classical traditions. The struggle between the Classicists and Romanticists was waged with considerable vigour on both sides, and whilst Ishaq lived the victory remained with him, but after that, the principles of the new school gained the day. There can be little doubt however, that the new art tendencies suited the general social and political drift of the period.

It is not easy to discern fully what the principles of the Romantic ~~school~~ school were, as Al-Isfahānī only makes general statements. That it deliberately altered the rhythmic modes (īqā'āt), ignored the courses (majāri), and introduced the Persian scale, is quite evident. Ishaq al-Mausilī, following the ancient traditions, ~~had~~ <sup>✓</sup> had carefully classified the rhythmic modes, but Prince Ibrāhīm disputed the correctness of this, and ~~some~~ some interesting discussions on the subject have been preserved. Al-Isfahānī himself devoted a treatise to this question, which unfortunately has not been preserved. ~~M/~~

More serious still was the interference with the old modos melodic. This was <sup>evidently</sup> due to the introduction of the Khurāsānī scale of two limmas and a comma as exhibited in the tunbūr al-khurāsānī. This scale made its first appearance in the early 9th century, and we actually know the names of two of the virtuosi who were responsible for the innovation. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi says, - "Mukhāriq (d. 845) and 'Allawaya

~~A/~~ Ishaq could trace back his traditions through pupil to master up to the days of the jāhiliyya, - Ishaq al-Mausilī, Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī, Siyyāṭ, Burdān, 'Azza al-Mailā', and Rā'iqa.

~~M/~~ The very names of the rhythmic modes had been altered, as we know from 'Amr ibn Bānā, one of the supporters of Prince Ibrāhīm. He speaks of the ramal awwāl and ramal thānī instead of the ramal (or ramal thaqlī) and ramal khafīf.



altered the ~~music~~<sup>old</sup> (music), all of it, and had introduced Persian notes (nagamat) into it. And when the Hijāzian came to the 'bleeding' (.i.e. it was too full of notes)! ~~Xing~~ requires bleeding' (.i.e. it was too full of notes)!"

"Of the two schools" says Al-Iṣḫānī, "that of Iṣḥāq (al-Mausilī) considered it a crime that the old music should be rendered in any way than as it had been traditionally handed down. The other school, led by Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mandī and his followers, such as Mukhāriq, Shāriya, Raiq, & others, subjected the old music to their caprices". Our author was anxious to pillory the Romanticists for all time, and he names those responsible for the alteration of the old Arabian music as follows. "Among the foremost of those who corrupted (the old music) were, - the family of Ḥamdūn ibn Ismā'īl and his teacher Mukhāriq, the pupils of Zaryāt (? Zaryāb) a songstress of Al-Wāthiq, and the female slaves of Shāriya and Raiq". He then gives the names of the Classicists who followed Iṣḥāq al-Mausilī, and they were, 'Uraib and her circle of singing-girls, Al-Qāsim ibn Zurzūr, the circle of Badhl the songstress, and the musicians of the Barmakid family."

Jahḡa al-Barmakī, who died in 938, said that in his day so great had been the tampering with the old music that "it was impossible to hear one of the ~~music~~<sup>old</sup> songs executed as they had been composed". At the same time, Al-Iṣḫānī, writing about the mid-10th century, would have us believe that in spite of this, the old theory (and presumably the scale) was still in vogue. He says, - "All that we have mentioned of the genres (ajnas) of the songs, ~~music~~ follows the theory of Iṣḥāq al-

X. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, iii, 190.

W. Al-Iṣḫānī, ix, 35.

Al-Wāthiq employed female singers from Khurāsān called fahlīdhiyyāt. They received this name after the famous Persian minstrel of old called Fahlīd (Barbud).







(nisf al-nahār) with Zankūfā, and the time of noon (zuhr) with Ushāq, and between the prayers with Hijāz, and the time of the afternoon (‘aṣr) with ‘Irāq, and the time of sunset (ghurūb) with Isfahan, and the time of nightfall (maghrib) with Nawā, and after the evening prayer (‘aṣhā) with Buzurk, and the time of sleep with Mukhālīf (= Zīrāfkand)”.

Yet the Persian system, as exhibited in the scale of the tunbūr al-khurāsānī, did not supercede the older Arabian and Pythagorean systems, but found acceptance side by side with them, especially to the east of the Tigris and Euphrates. What helped to counteract the Persian influence, or rather the Khurāsānī influence, was the ~~ascendency~~ ascendancy of the Greek Scholiasts. We have already seen that the scholars of the Bait al-hikma, Al-Kindī, and the Banū Mūsā, had been busy with the treatises of the Greeks on music, which had been translated into Arabic. Among the Greek musical theorists translated were, Aristoxenos, Euklid, Ptolemy, and Nikomachos. Aristoxenos was known in Arabic by two books, the Kitāb al-rīmūs (or rīthmūs) ~~mus~~ <sup>A/</sup> (? Harmonics) and the Kitāb al-īqā‘ (Rhythm). In addition to his Problems, Euklid was studied through his Kitāb al-nagham or Kitāb al-[a]rmūnīqī (Harmonics) and his Kitāb al-qānūn (Canon), whilst Nikomachos was represented by his Kitāb al-mūsīqī al-kabīr (Grand Book on Music), and the Kitāb al-nagham (Harmonics). Ptolemy was also known by his Harmonics, and Pythagoras had a work claimed for him entitled Tawālīf fī’l-arithmātiqī wa’l-mūsīqī (Intimacies in Arithmetic and Music). <sup>W/</sup>

When these works made their appearance, a new world was opened to the Arabs. Music then became one of the courses of scientific study and part of the quadrivium, as we see in suc

A/ Flügel (Al-Fihrist, ii, 125) and Suter (Der Math. Verz. im Fihrist, 23) think that this should be rithmūs. It is quite likely however, that the word is a copyists error for ريموس (Armonīqī) (cf. ريموس).

W/ Al-Fihrist, 269-70. Casiri, i, 240-2. Wenrich, 88



in these documents

writers as Al-Sarakhsī, Thābit ibn Qurra, Qusta ibn Lūqā, and Al-Fārābī. What the Arabs borrowed from the Greeks at this period may be traced in technical nomenclature. The Arabic word ghina' had stood for "music" as well as "song". Now, ghina' was applied to the practical art of music in general, whilst the theoretical art was termed mūsīqī (μουσική). In a similar way the musician, hitherto the mughannī, became occasionally termed the mūsīqār, just as the instruments of music, the ālāt, came to be called the mūsīqāt. The names of musical instruments also became slightly affected, when the flat-chested guitar called the murabba' was called the qithāra or qītāra (κιθάρα), and the ~~murabba'~~ mi'zafa (?) or psaltery the qānūn (κανών). Much of this nomenclature soon passed away.

nomenclature

What was more permanent was the newly adopted ~~murabba'~~ in the theoretical art. The interval, originally called nabra, was now the bu'd, and each specific interval was given a name. The quarter-tone was the irkhā', the semitones were the baqiyya (λείμμα) and infisal (ἀποτομή), and the whole-tone the tanīn (τόνος). The ancient Greek notions of genres (γένη) and species (εἶδη) were adopted as the ajnās and anwā', and became important factors in later theory. At the same time, the practical theorists like Yahyā ibn 'Alī ibn Yahyā, offered a stubborn resistance to the Greek theories. ~~M/~~

~~M/~~ Yahyā ibn 'Alī ibn Yahyā, Brit.Mus.MS. Or.2361, fol 236, v.

\* 1811, 93.  
 \* 1816, 97.  
 \* Al-mughannī, 243-4.



in these doctrines

The doctrine of the ēthos was given a fresh lease of life by the contact with the literature of ancient Greece. The theory of numbers, the Harmony of the Spheres, and similar theories were seriously discussed. The Ikhwān al-Safā (10th century) and Al-Mas'ūdī both devoted considerable attention to the question. "It is clear" say the former, "that to the movements of the spheres and stars are notes (naghamāt) and melodies (alḥān)".<sup>C</sup> These people found the "first cause" for all music in the world of "generation and corruption". They taught that "the temperaments of the body are of many varieties, . . . and to every temperament & nature there is a note resembling it and a melody befitting it".<sup>B</sup> For that reason music was employed in the hospitals, "because it lightens pain in sickness and disease, counteracting their malignancy and healing much".<sup>A</sup> Every note had its ethical value, and so had each genre (jins), mode (lāhn), tone (ṭamdīd), and rhythm (īqā').<sup>S</sup>

Following the example laid down in the Umayyad period and the Golden Age, by Yūnis al-Kātib, Yahyā al-Makkī, Ishāq al-Mausilī, and others, both ~~musicians~~ virtuosi and ~~musicians~~ dilettanti became quite diligent in the study of the history of music and the lives of the musicians. Al-Mas'ūdī says that he found an abundant literature dealing "with music (samā'), its divisions (aqṣām) and kinds (anwā'), the ~~music~~ origin of the song (ghinā'), and its principles, among

<sup>C</sup> Ikhwān al-Safā, 101.

<sup>B</sup> Ibid, 92.

<sup>A</sup> Ibid, 87.

<sup>S</sup> Al-Khwārizmī, 243-4.



the Arabs and other nations, and biographies of the learned among the celebrated musicians ~~unmentioned~~ both ancient and modern". <sup>Z/</sup> ~~practically~~ Al-Isfahānī compiled his famous Kitāb al-aghānī, which is <sup>a</sup> history of Arabian music from the Days of Idolatry to the 10th century. Muḥammad ibn Ishaq al-Nadīm wrote his monumental work called the Fihrist, which gives us such valuable information about the writers and books on music. Biographers of musicians abound, - Qurais al-Jarrāhī, Janḥa al-Barmakī, Abū Ḥashīsha, Al-Ḥasan al-Nasībī, Al-Madīnī, and many others.

Instrumental music was greatly developed during this period. The tunbūr (pandore) became a special favourite with the virtuosi, contesting the supremacy of the ūd (lute) as the instrument par excellence for the accompaniment. <sup>\*/</sup> The peculiar timbre of the tunbūr, due to the drum-like construction of its sound-chest, was evidently more to the taste of dilettanti who had so significant an influence in musical matters. The loud tone of the instrument made it more acceptable for solo work and more so, as an accompaniment to the dance. Two kinds of pandore are described by Al-Fārābī, the old tunbur al-mīzānī, now called the tunbūr al-paghdādī, which gave the old Pagan scale, and the tunbūr al-khurāsānī, which gave the Persian scale of two limmas and a comma. This latter, in Al-Fārābī's day, was mainly confined to Khurāsān, and to countries north and east of it. <sup>B/</sup>

<sup>Z/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, §103. <sup>\*/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 184-5.

<sup>B/</sup> Kosegarten, Lib. Cant., 89, seq.



The ūd (lute) was still the most important instrument and it was still strung with four strings in the east, although in Al-Andalus, it possessed five.<sup>A/</sup> An arch-lute called the shahrūd was invented in the year 912 by a certain Hakīm ibn Anwas al-Sughdī.<sup>B/</sup> It had a compass of three octaves.<sup>C/</sup> Harps and psalteries like the sanj, mi'zafa, jank, wannaj, and salbāq (= σαμβύκη) were in general use.<sup>D/</sup> The rabāb or rebec possessed two or three strings, and at this period was in considerable demand in Khurāsān.<sup>E/</sup> The shaushal (? shaushak) was another kind of viol which had a large sound-chest.<sup>F/</sup> It is during this period that we read of the bow for the first time.

Among the wind instruments we find the Persian influence rather marked. The old vertical flute called the qasba or qassāba, was now known as the nāy, a Persian name. We also read of smaller flutes called the shabbāba, the suryānī, and the yarā', as well as the suffāra, which was a flageolet.<sup>G/</sup> The Persian reed-pipe known as the surmā or surnāy, which was a smaller instrument than the Arabian mizmār ~~was~~ or zamr, had become a great favourite. We read for the first time of the double reed-pipe the mizmār al-muthanna or diyānī.<sup>H/</sup> We have evidence that the organ (arghanun) both the pneumatic and hydraulic, was known at this period to the Arabs.<sup>I/</sup>

In Military music ~~we find the~~ we find the būq (horn) and the nafīr (trumpet), in company with drums of various types, such as the ~~tabl~~

- <sup>A/</sup> Kosegarten, Lib. Cant., 76. Al-Maqqarī, hok. Dyn., II, 119.  
<sup>C/</sup> Ibid., 43. <sup>B/</sup> Cf. Al-Khwārizmī, 237.  
<sup>D/</sup> Kosegarten, 77, 110. Al-Khwārizmī, 236. Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, I, 92.  
<sup>E/</sup> Al-Khwārizmī, 237. <sup>F/</sup> Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, I, 92. Burhān-i Qāṭi'.  
<sup>G/</sup> Kosegarten, 95. Al-Khwārizmī, 237. Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, I, 92.  
<sup>H/</sup> Kosegarten, 103. Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 90, 91.  
<sup>I/</sup> Kitāb al-Aghānī, ix, 95. See my Byzantine Musical Instruments in the IXth century.



kūs (kettledrum large), tabl al-markab (ordinary kettledrum) better known as the naqqāra, the dabḍab, and the duhul. Besides these there were other drums such as the kūba, & tabl tawīl, and the tambourines called the duff, ghirbāl, and mazhar. ~~A~~

The period of the First Decline, in spite of the political decadence, the internecine strife, and the infirmity of the court of Baghdād, was <sup>almost</sup> as glorious an era for music, as the Golden Age. It is said of Al-Mutawakkal (847) who opened this epoch, that music and the dance reached a higher degree of excellence than before. The eloquent oration on music of Ibn Khurdādhbih before the throne of Al-Mu'tamid (870) reveals the temper of the age. "Music (ghina')" he says, "sharpens the intellect, softens the disposition, and agitates the soul. It gives cheer and courage to the heart, and high-mindedness to the debased. With wine (nabīdh), it creates freshness and vivacity against the grief and care which afflict the body. It is to be preferred to speech, as health would be to sickness. .... May the peace of Allāh fall on the sage who discovered this art, on the philosopher who improved it. What a mystery he unveiled! What a secret he revealed!". ~~S~~

*of the West*

Similarly in Al-Andalus ~~we~~ find the court poet Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi singing the praises of music. He calls it "the 'foraging ground' of hearing, the pasturage of the soul, the spring grass of the heart, the arena of love, the comfort of the dejected, the companionship of the lonely, and the provision of the traveller". .....

~~A~~ Ikhwān al-Safā, I, 92.

~~S~~ Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 88.

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...And oftentimes man only appreciates the blessing of this world and the next through beautiful music ~~Wahid~~ (alnān), for it induces to generosity of character in the performance of kindness, and of observing the ties of kinship, and the defending of one's honour, and the overcoming of faults. Oftentimes man will weep over his sins through (the influence of) music, and the heart will be softened from its stubbornness, and man may image the Kingdom of Heaven, and perceive its joys, through the medium of beautiful music".<sup>W</sup>

Prince Ibrāhīm, and he gave his first public appearance at the court of Al-Ma'mūn (820-3). He was quite prominent in the days of Al-Ma'mūn (820-3), and on the accession of Al-Mutawakkil (847) he became the Khalīf's "boon companion".

(3)

With Prince Ibrāhīm he was a great favourite, and he was one of the virtuosi still thronged the courts, although there were no outstanding figures as of old. Among the performers, whether vocal or instrumental, there were no names that could be placed side by side with a Ma'bad, Ibn 'A'isha, Ibn Suraij, or Mālik of the Umayyad days, nor with an Ibrāhīm al-Mausilī, Ishāq al-Mausilī, Prince Ibrāhīm, or Ibn Jāmi' of the Golden Age. Fresh conditions obtained, and something more than <sup>the</sup> talents of a virtuoso were demanded. To make headway at court and elsewhere, a minstrel had to possess other than musical executive accomplishments, and it will be noticed that among the virtuosi who will now be mentioned, there were a goodly few who rose to celebrity because of their abilities as poets, authors, story-tellers, chess players, and as agreeable "boon companions".

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W. Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, iii, 176.



Amr ibn Bānā (d.891) whose full name was 'Amr ibn Muḥammad ibn Sulaimān ibn Rāshid, was a freeman of Yūsuf ibn 'Umar al-Thaqāfi. His father was head of one of the government offices and a distinguished scribe, whilst his mother, from whom he got his name Bānā, was the daughter of Rauḥ, the secretary of Salama al-Wasīf. 'Amr was a pupil of Ishāq al-Mausili and Prince Ibrāhīm, and he made his first public appearance at the court of Al-Ma'mūn (813-55). He was quite prominent in the days of Al-Mu'tasim (833), and on the accession of Al-Mutawakkal (847) he became the Khalif's "boon companion". With Prince Ibrāhīm he was a great favourite, and he was one of his most prominent supporters in the Romantic ~~movement~~ movement. We are told however, that although he was "an excellent singer and a good poet", he was, at bottom, but a mediocre musician. On one occasion, at a musical festival given by 'Abdallāh ibn Tāhir, he carried off the prize, but this was due, we are told, to the importuna/oy of Prince Ibrāhīm, who was particularly solicitous that his protégé should have this honour. He was not an instrumentalist, and was quite ignorant of the art of accompaniment. His fame seems to have rested mainly on his Kitāb mujarrad al-aghānī (Book of Choice Songs), which, says Ibn Khallikān, was "a sufficient proof of his abilities". On the other hand, Al-Isfahānī, in comparing this work with that of Ishāq al-Mausili, has small opinion of its worth. <sup>94</sup> "His haughtiness and pride were excessive". He died at Sāmarrā of leprosy. ~~A~~

0. Al-Isfahānī, v, 52.

A. Al-Isfahānī, xiv, 52-55. Al-Fihrist, 145. Ibn Khallikān, 11, 414.

He is the author of Kitāb al-gharīb al-Asmā' mentioned by Von Hammer, iv, 744. Al-Isfahānī only refers to him as Bānā or Bānā ibn 'Amr al-Mausili. I have added al-gharīb following Al-Mas'ūdī.

2. Al-Isfahānī, xiii, 120-2, 123, 126, xiv, 5, 51, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.



Abū Hashīsha, or Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Umayya, was a clever tunbūrist who flourished at the courts from the time of Al-Ma'mūn (813) to Al-Mu'tamid (870). He had some reputation also as a composer and musical littérateur. Several of his melodies are mentioned in the kitāb al-aghānī, whilst two of his books, - the kitāb al-mughannī al-majīd (Book of <sup>the</sup> Celebrated Singer), and the kitāb akhbār al-tunbūrīyīn (Stories of the Tunbūrists), are given in the Fihrist. Among his pupils was the celebrated Jahḥa al-Barmakī.

Aḥmad ibn Sadaqa ibn Abī Sadaqa was the son and grandson of famous musicians at the court of Hārūn, and <sup>he</sup> was one of the greatest performers on the tunbūr from the time of Al-Ma'mūn (813) to Al-Mutawakkal (847), hence his surname Al-Tunbūrī. He was besides, an excellent composer in the ramal, hazaj, & makhūrī rhythmic modes.

Bunān ibn 'Amr (al-Hārith) was a clever musician at the courts of Al-Mutawakkal (847) and Al-Mu'tasir (861). It was this musician that the poetess Fadl fell in love with, and of whom Al-Buhturī wrote, -

"The lute ('ūd) resounds with pleasing tune  
Under the arm of Bunān,  
Whilst Zunām's hand just as nimbly  
Plays upon the reed-pipe (mizmār)".

With Al-Muntasir, Bunān was a special favourite.

Abū'l-'Alā al-Ḥasan al-Masūd was the son of a butcher of Baghdād. He was a great composer, and as a tunbūrist, is considered by Jahḥa al-Barmakī, the historian of the tunbūrists, as the foremost performer of his day, and was surnamed Al-Tunbūrī. He flourished at the courts of

X. Al-Isfahānī, viii, 173. xi, 32. xiv, 54.

Q. Al-Fihrist, 145. Al-Isfahānī, xxi, 257.

W. Al-Isfahānī, xix, 137-9. xxi, 154.

I. He is the Shaibān ibn al-Hārith al-'Awwād<sup>h</sup> mentioned by Von Hammer, iv, 744. Al-Isfahānī only refers to him as Bunān or Bunān ibn 'Amr al-Mughannī. I have added al-Hārith following Al-Mas'ūdī.

2. Al-Isfahānī, viii, 176-8, 184, 186. xvii, 8. xxi, 179, 184. Al-Mas'ūdī, vii, 294.



Al-Wāthiq (842), Al-Mutawakkal (847), and Al-Muntasir (861).  
 Ibn 'Abd Rabbih says that he was "one of the ablest men &  
 in singing", and we read of him with Zunain (Ahmad ibn  
 Yahyā al-Makkī) and Dubais, at the house of Abū 'Isā ibn  
 al-Mutawakkal.<sup>K</sup> It was of this minstrel that the poet  
 wrote,-

"When Abū'l-'Alā is with us,

Then welcome be company & wine".

'Abdallāh ibn Abī'l-'Alā, a son of the preceding, was a  
 musician of Sāmarrā, and a pupil of Ishāq al-Mausilī.  
 Al-Isfahānī praises him for his superior abilities.<sup>A</sup>

Ahmad ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Abī'l-'Alā, son of the above, was  
 also a fine musician. He flourished at the court of  
 Al-Mu'tadid (892). Muknāriq and 'Allawaya were his  
 teachers.<sup>B</sup>

'Amr al-Madānī was a famous singer and tūnbūrist who  
 was born at Baghdād. Jaḥḥā al-Barmakī says, on the  
 authority of ~~Abū'l-'Ubais ibn Ḥamdūn~~, that whilst both Abū Hashīsha and  
 Al-Ḥasan al-Masūd<sup>M</sup> were considered to be the first among  
 contemporary tūnbūrists, 'Amr al-~~Maidānī~~ really  
 surpassed them both.<sup>C</sup>

Jirāb al-Daula was the name given to Abū'l-'Abbās  
 Ahmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Allawaya (?) al-Sajzī. He was a  
 clever tūnbūrist, although more celebrated perhaps as the  
 author of a book of "rare & laughable stories" entitled  
 the kitāb tarwīḥ al-arwāḥ wa miftāḥ al-surūr wa'l-afrāḥ  
 (Alleviation of the Spirits and the Key to Joy and Gladness<sup>D</sup>).

<sup>W</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xxi, 256-8.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, iii, 191. <sup>A</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xx, 114.

<sup>B</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 88. ix, 34. xx, 114.

<sup>M</sup> The name is written Mastūrad in both the Būlāq and  
 Sāsī editions of the kitāb al-aghānī.

<sup>C</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xx, 66-7.

<sup>D</sup> Al-Fihrist, 153.



*have been*

Ibn al-Qaṣṣār, or Abū Faḍl Sulaimān ibn 'Alī was a fine ṭunbūrist who is praised by Jaḥṣa al-Barmakī. He appears to be the favourite accompanist of Al-Mu'tazz (866) who was himself a musician, and we are told that every time he performed, the Khalif gave him a hundred pieces of gold.<sup>3/</sup>

'Abdallāh ibn al-'Abbās ibn al-Faḍl ibn al-Rabī'ī was a singer, poet, and composer, who flourished at the courts from the time of Harūn (886) to Al-Muntaṣir (861). He was a great admirer of Ishāq al-Mausilī. Al-Mutawakkal was particularly attached to him, and two of his compositions were celebrated.<sup>4/</sup>

Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Yahyā al-Makkī was the son and grandson of famous musicians, and a well-known singer at the court of Al-Mu'tamid (870). He became noted for his pupils.<sup>5/</sup>

The Ziryāb family in Al-Andalus carried on the musical reputation of the founder Abū'l-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Nāfi'. The latter had eight sons & two daughters, "all of whom" says Al-Maqqarī, "sang and practised the art of music". Their names were, - 'Abd al-Raḥmān, 'Ubaidallāh, Yahyā, Ja'far, Muḥammad, Al-Qāsim, and the daughters Ḥamdūna and 'Ulayya. 'Abd al-Raḥmān inherited his father's talents and carried on the music school, but he displeased the aristocracy by the undue familiarity which he assumed. He was an extremely vain man, and in singing he asserted that he had no equal. Aḥmad had his father's poetic gifts, whilst Al-Qāsim was considered the finest singer of the family. The best all-round musician was 'Ubaidallāh. Ḥamdūna married the wazīr Hishām ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, and Al-Maqqarī says that she "excelled in singing" and was more proficient than her sister 'Ulayya.<sup>2/</sup>

3/ Al-Iṣfahānī, xii, 167-8.

4/ Al-Iṣfahānī, xvii, 121-41.

5/ Al-Iṣfahānī, vi, 17.

2/ Al-Maqqarī, Analectes, ii, 89.



Quraiṣ al-Jarrāhī, sometimes called Quraiṣ al-Mughannī (d. 936), was another contemporary musician of merit, and "one of the clever ones of the singers, and among the most learned of them". He wrote an important work entitled the Kitāb sinā'at al-ghinā' wa akhbār al-mughanniyyīn \* (The Art of the Song and Stories of the Singers), which dealt with the songs in alphabetical order. He did not live to complete his work, but what was finished and given to the public, comprised about a thousand leaves. X

Jahḡa al-Barmakī was the name generally given to Abū'l-Hasan Ahmad ibn Ja'far ibn Mūsā ibn Khālīd ibn Barmak. He was born about 839 and died at Wāsiṭ in 938. Ibn Khallikān says that he was "a man of talent and a master of various accomplishments". The author of the Fihrist says that he was "a poet and a singer, innate in poetry and clever in the art of singing to the tunbūr, and well educated". Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī says that he was "the first singer of his time". He was taught the tunbūr (pandore) by no less a master than Abū Hashīsha. "He had met the learned and the narrators, and had studied under them, and had a great reputation in this respect". His books, the Kitāb al-tunbūriyyīn (Book of the Tunbūrists) and the Kitāb al-nadīm (Book of the Boon Companions) became quite famous. Al-Iṣfahānī quotes from the former, although he censures Jahḡa for calumniating several musicians, and insists that it is the duty of a biographer to bring out the best points in the life of a person, not <sup>the</sup> his worst. W In spite of his talents, he appears to have been a man of small mind, and even the author of the Fihrist speaks of his "meanness of soul". He was favoured at the courts of Al-Mu'tadid (892) and Al-Muqtadir (908). M

X. Al-Fihrist, 156.

\* It is written throughout the Fihrist.

W. Al-Iṣfahānī, v, 161. See Guidi, 262.

M. Al-Fihrist, 145-6. Al-Iṣfahānī, v, 32. Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 261. Ibn Khallikān, i, 118.

It was 'Abdallāh ibn al-Mu'tazz that nicknamed him Jahḡa ("cross-eyed").



Among the lesser known musicians of the period were,--  
 'Amīr ibn Murra,<sup>1/</sup> Abū'l-'Ubais ibn Ḥamdūn,<sup>2/</sup> Abū'l-'Anbas ibn  
 Ḥamdūn,<sup>3/</sup> Abū'l-Faḍl Raḥnādh,<sup>4/</sup> 'Ath'ath al-Aswād,<sup>4/</sup> and  
 Ibn al-Māriqī,<sup>5/</sup> all of whom were present at the court of  
 Al-Mutawakkal (847). One of the principal men of state under  
 this Khalif,-- Ibrāhīm ibn Mudabbir, patronized several of  
 these musicians.<sup>6/</sup> Nashwān was a singer in the house of  
 'Abdallāh ibn al-Mu'tazz.<sup>7/</sup> Ibrāhīm ibn Abī'l-'Ubais,<sup>0/</sup>  
 Kanīz, Al-Qāsim ibn Zurzūr,<sup>x/</sup> Ibrāhīm ibn al-Qāsim ibn Zurzūr,<sup>8/</sup>  
 and Waṣīf al-Zāmir,<sup>9/</sup> were musicians at the court of  
 Al-Muqtadir (908).

Among the songstresses, some famous names have been  
 preserved.

Maḥbūba ("beloved") was a half-caste born at <sup>al-</sup>Baṣra who  
 became the property of a man of Tā'if. She was given a fine  
 education, and became a good singer and lutenist, but above all  
 a fine poetess. 'Abdallāh ibn Tāhir purchased her as a gift  
 for Al-Mutawakkal (847), and the Khalif became so infatuated  
 that he could not bear her out of his sight. After the  
 assassination of this Khalif, a number of the court songstresses  
 including Maḥbūba, passed into the hands of Waṣīf al-Turkī,  
 the wazīr, and when she first appeared before him she was still  
 dressed in mourning for her late master, which the wazīr, at  
 first, appeared to be amused at. When however, he commanded  
 her to sing, she took her lute and sang some elegaic verses in  
 memory of Al-Mutawakkal, which so enraged Waṣīf, that he had  
 her flung into prison. At the demand of the Turkish captain  
 Bughā, she was set at liberty, on condition that she left  
 Sāmarrā. She retired to Baghdād and died in obscurity.<sup>As</sup>

(xx, 10-11, 66.

- |                                   |                              |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1/ Al-Iṣfahānī, xx, 35-36.        | 2/ Al-Iṣfahānī, xix, 118-19. |
| 3/ Al-Iṣfahānī, xii, 3. xiv, 162. | 4/ Al-Iṣfahānī, xiii, 30-32. |
| 4/ Al-Iṣfahānī, xii, 32, 59.      | 5/ Al-Iṣfahānī, vi, 20, 21.  |
| 6/ Al-Iṣfahānī, xix, 114-27.      | 7/ Al-Iṣfahānī, ix, 143.     |
| 0/ Al-Iṣfahānī, v, 32.            | 8/ Al-Iṣfahānī, viii, 44.    |
| 9/ Al-Iṣfahānī, v, 32.            | X/ Al-Iṣfahānī, v, 32.       |
| A/ Al-Iṣfahānī, xix, 132-4.       | Al-Mas'ūdī, vii, 281-6.      |



Farīda was originally a singing-girl of 'Amr ibn Bāna the musician, but later passed into the intimate circles of the court of Al-Wāthiq (842) and Al-Mutawakkal (847), where her performances were highly esteemed. She was a pupil of Shāriya, and a great admirer of the talents of Ishāq al-Mausilī, whose reputation she defended when it was assailed. <sup>S/</sup>

<sup>u/</sup> Mūnisa was a singing-girl of Al-Ma'mūn (813) <sup>W/</sup> but was later possessed by Muḥammad ibn Tāhir. There is an anecdote of her in the Murūj al-dhahab of Al-Mas'ūdī, as well of some of her verses, for she had a reputation as a poetess. <sup>M/</sup>

Among the lesser songstresses were, - Zaryāb, whom we find singing before 'Abdallāh ibn al-Mu'tazz, <sup>2/</sup> ~~of~~ Salifa, ~~who~~ a singing-girl owned by the preceding, <sup>who</sup> ~~is shown~~ performing in front of Al-Muqtadir (908). <sup>5/</sup>

~~~~~~~~~ Shāji belonged to 'Ubaidallāh ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Tāhir, and she sang to Al-Mu'tadid (892). <sup>5/</sup> Bunān was another singing-girl who appeared before Al-Mutawakkal (847). <sup>6/</sup>

It has already been pointed out how musical literature had grown. ~~~~~~~~~ Historians, biographers, and writers on the theory of music, had sprung up on all sides, and among them were some of the foremost names in the annals of Arabic literature.

'Alī al-Iṣfahānī (897-967) or Abū'l-Faraj 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusain ibn Muḥammad al-Quraishī was born at Iṣfahān, but was an Arab who claimed descent from Marwān the last Umayyad Khalif. Educated at Baghdād, he settled <sup>nominally</sup> at Aleppo under the

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<sup>S/</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, iii, 183-6, v, 95-6. viii, 166.  
<sup>W/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī says that she was a slave of Al-Mandī.  
<sup>M/</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, vii, ~~36~~ xx, 57. Al-Mas'ūdī, vii, 387-93.  
<sup>2/</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, ix, 142-3. <sup>3/</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, v, 32.  
<sup>5/</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, viii, 44-46.  
<sup>6/</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, xxi, 179.



patronage of the Ḥamdānids, although he led the life of the ordinary literary man in travel. He was a most painstaking collector of poetry and songs, and Al-Tanūkhī<sup>(d. 994)</sup> said of him,—"I never found a person knowing by heart such a quantity of poems, songs, &c," ~~unusually~~<sup>I</sup>. At Aleppo he compiled his famous Kitāb al-aghānī (Book of Songs), a work of the first rank among the literary productions of the Arabs.<sup>2</sup> It took a life-time to compile, and the vast erudition displayed, to say nothing of the enormous industry and patience which it engendered, leaves one abashed at the productions which pass as "musical literature" today. The scope of the Kitāb al-aghānī cannot be estimated in words, but something of its purport may be gauged from the preface, from which I quote the following.—

"This book was written by 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusain ibn Muḥammad al-Quraishī, the writer known as Al-Isfahānī. And he has gathered in it what was contemporary (of the songs) and what he could collect of the songs of the Arabs both old and new. And he mentions all that concerns the author of the poetry (shī'r), the composer of the melody (lahn), the species (ṭarīqa) of the rhythmic mode (īqā'), and the species of the melodic mode (aspa'), as well as what any of the musicians have commented upon these, explaining the most abstruse of the unusual expressions, the weaknesses of the inflexion (i'rāb) in the prosody ('arūd) of its poetry, which leads to the knowledge of its scansion, and the division of its melodies (alḥān)."

1. Ibn Khallikān, ii, 249.

2. Huart, Arab. Lit., 185.

2. ~~Without any biographical or historical material as in the Kitāb al-aghānī.~~



Arabic

Besides being a history of music from the earliest times to the 10th century, it is a storehouse of information on almost every phase of the social life of the Arabs. Ibn Khaldūn calls it "The register (diwān) of the Arabs", and the "final resource of the student of belles lettres". Saif al-Dawla <sup>the Hamdanid Sultan</sup> gave the author 1000 pieces of gold on account of this work, whilst the Andalusian Sultān Al-Hakam II bestowed a similar amount.

The text of this work was published by the Būlāq Press in twenty volumes in 1868, whilst a twenty-first volume was issued at Leyden in 1888 by Brūnnow. <sup>A.</sup> ~~Wellhausen~~ Guidi <sup>then</sup> gave us an invaluable index to these volumes in his Tables alphabétiques du Kitāb al-aghānī (1895-1900). A more correct edition of Kitāb al-aghānī was published at Cairo in 1905-6, in twenty one volumes, together with Guidi's amended index in Arabic. This edition, in contradistinction from that of Būlāq, is called the Sāsī edition, after ~~Wellhausen~~ Afandī Sāsī al-Maghribī. For a better understanding of the text, one must also consult the Tashīh kitāb al-aghānī by Muḥammad 'Abd al-Jawwād al-Asma'ī (Cairo, 1916). Quatremère began a French translation in the Journal Asiatique in 1835, but unfortunately his death cut short the enterprise. Kosegarten then essayed a Latin translation in his worthy Alii Ispahanensis Liber Cantilenarum Magnus (1840-43?), but he got no further than Quatremère.

Al-Isfahanī was also the author of a kitāb al-qiyān (Book of Singing-Girls), <sup>1.</sup> Kitāb al-imā' al-shawā'ir (Book of Female Slave poets), Kitāb mujarrad al-aghānī (Book of Choice Songs ~~www~~), <sup>2.</sup> Kitāb al-ghilmān al-mughanniyīn (Book of

G.

- <sup>A.</sup> Wellhausen in the Z.D.M., i, 145-51, also added material.  
<sup>1.</sup> Thus in Ibn Khallikān, but Quatremère reads Kitāb al-nabāt (Book of Vegetation).  
<sup>2.</sup> ~~www~~ Without any biographical or historical material as in the Kitāb al-aghānī.

Shangti

under the editorship of  
the Shaikh Ahmad al-



Slave Singers), Kitāb akhbār Janḡa al-Barmakī (Book of Stories of Janḡa al-Barmakī), and a Kitāb al-nānāt (Book of Taverns).<sup>1/</sup>

Al-Mas'ūdī (d. ca. 957) or Abū'l-Hasan 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusain ibn 'Alī al-Mas'ūdī, came of a family of Al-Ḥijāz, one of his ancestors, Mas'ūd, being a "Companion of the Prophet". He was born at Baghdād in the last years of the 3rd century of the Hijra. From his earliest years he had a passion for travel, and in the year 912 we find him at Multān, and three years later in Fārs and Kirmān. He again penetrated India, journeying from there (possibly by the Deccan) to Ceylon, Madagascar, and to the coast of 'Uman. It is not improbable that he even travelled as far as ~~Wann~~ the Malay archipelago and the seaboard of China. We certainly know that he visited the shores of the Caspian and the Red Sea.

He then set to work to collate the materials that he had amassed during his travels, and his literary labours began. He was still unsettled however as to his residence, and we find him variously domiciled at Tiberias (926), Antioch (943) Damascus (945), and Fustāt (947).

His great work, the Akhbār al-zamān, is a universal history from "the Creation of the world to the year 947". It was completed in thirty volumes, of which, but a solitary volume, now at Vienna, has been preserved. The Murūj al-dhahab and the Kitāb al-awsāt, were two other important works from his pen, the former being an extract from the Akhbār al-zamān, and

<sup>1/</sup> Quatremère translates this as "Recueil d'airs", but cf. Kosegarten, Lib. Cant., 196. For the life of Al-Isfahānī see Ibn Khallikān, ii, 249-52. Wüstenfeld, Die Geschichtsschreiber der Araber, No. 132.

*as though it were Kitāb al-akhbār*



the latter an abridgement of it.

It is in the Murūj al-dhahab that we find a section devoted to the early history of Arabian music, which was derived from an earlier authority, Ibn Khurdādhbih (fl. 870-92). Scattered throughout this work are sundry references to music and musicians which are of considerable importance. The text of this work was issued by Barbier de Meynard in 1861-77

~~in nine volumes~~ in nine volumes under the title of Les prairies d'or.

Al-Mas'ūdī was particularly interested in music, and he tells us in his Murūj al-dhahab, that in his other books he dealt "fully with the question of music, the various kinds of musical instruments (malāhī), dances, rhythms (طرب)<sup>S/</sup>, and notes (nagham)", as well as "the kinds of instruments used by the Greeks, Byzantines, Syrians, Nabataeans, and the people of Sind, India, Persia, &c.". In his Kitāb al-zulaf he informs us that he has dealt with harmonic relations (and string lengths, as well as the influence of melodies on the soul, inspiring it to joy and gladness, and driving away care and sorrow. In his Akhbār al-zamān and Kitāb al-awsāt, he also gave some "curious details about the concerts and musical instruments of these peoples".<sup>I/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī is counted among the greatest of Arab historians, worthy of rank with Al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Athīr. Ibn Khaldūn calls him "The imām of the historians".<sup>O/</sup>

<sup>S/</sup> The text has طرب and De Meynard translates it as rhythms.

<sup>I/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, ii, 322.

<sup>O/</sup> De Meynard, Prairies d'or, Avant-propos. Quatremère, Journal asiatique, Ser.iii, Tome, vii. Notices et Extraits, viii.



Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī (860-940) or Ahmad ibn Muḥammad, was an Andalusian Arab known by his anthology the 'Iqd al-farīd (The Unique Necklace). It contains twenty five sections, each of which is named after <sup>a</sup>precious stone~~s~~. It contains one section (kitāb al-yāqūtāt al-thāniya) devoted to "The Science of Melodies, and the Disagreement of People about Them," which deals with a number of interesting topics, including the lawfulness of listening to music, the origins of the song, biographies of the musicians, &c. Several editions of the text have been printed ~~in~~ <sup>at</sup> the Būlāq and Cairo presses, <sup>B</sup>but there is no translation.

Abū'l-Faraj Muḥammad ibn Ishāq ibn Abī Ya'qūb al-Nadīm al-Warrāq al-Baghdādī, was the author of a book entitled Al-Fihrist (The Index), which is the first bibliographical work known to history. Although the work was written after the period within the scope of this chapter, yet its pages cover the entire range of our subject so completely, that it cannot be omitted from our survey. Of the author we have little or no information, save that he was a book-seller or copyist (warrāq), that he was born in Baghdād, that he was in Constantinople in 988, and that he died about 995-6. <sup>M</sup>

The Fihrist, as its preface tells us, - "is the index of the books of all peoples, including Arabs and others, which exist in the Arabic language and writing, in every branch of knowledge, together with information of the compilers, and the classes of the authors, their genealogies, dates of birth, careers, times of death, domiciles, and their merits and demerits, from the time of the origin of each science down to the present time, i.e. the year 377 of the hijra (A.D. 987-8)".

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<sup>B</sup>. Būlāq, A.H. 1293, Cairo, A.H. 1303, seq.

<sup>M</sup>. It has been suggested that he was related to Ishāq al-Mausilī. Al-Fihrist, xi. Nicholson, Lit. Hist. of the Arabs, 362.



The work is divided into ten chapters (maqālāt) each of which is subdivided into sections (funūn). Three of the chapters give us valuable data concerning the early works on music and musicians, not only of the Arabs, but also those of the Greeks which were known in Arabic translation. The 3rd section, 3rd chapter contains "Stories of the Boon Companions, favourites, men of letters, musicians (mughanniyūn), jesters, buffoons, and the titles of their books".<sup>1</sup> The 1st section, 7th chapter gives us "Stories of the Natural Philosophers and Logicians (including Musical Theorists), and the titles of their books", with the various translations and commentaries on the same, such as are still in existence or are no longer extant".<sup>2</sup> The 2nd section, 7th chapter deals with "Stories of the Geometricians, Arithmeticians, Musical Theorists (musiqiyyūn) Accountants, Astronomers, Designers (of Scientific Instrument Mechanicians, and Engineers".<sup>3</sup> Most of the books mentioned have disappeared, and possibly only half-a-dozen out of some <sup>one</sup> hundred musical books are extant today. The holocausts of Hūlāgū and Tīmūr in the 13th and 15th centuries brought about the destruction of the great Baghdād libraries which appear to have contained, in many cases, exemplars of the works mentioned in the Fihrist.

The text of this work was published by Flügel, Roediger, and Müller in 1871-2, and the former had already analysed the work in the Z.D.M.G. in 1859. So far the historians.

I. Al-Fihrist, 140-56.

A. Ibid., 238-65.

2. Ibid., 265-85.

Equally as important were the biographers and littérateurs in music, most of who were also singers & instrumentalists as well.



The family of Abū Maṣṣūr al-Munajjim, famous as astrologers, poets, historians, and "boon companions" to the Khalifs, were all keen musicians. The first of them, Yahyā ibn Abī Maṣṣūr, was a freeman of Al-Maṣṣūr (754), and was very intimate with Al-Ma'mūn (813). He died about 851, and two of his sons, Muḥammad and 'Alī, were both keenly interested in music.

Muḥammad ibn Yahyā ibn Abī Maṣṣūr was a man "of eloquence and good education" says the Fihrist. He "had a knowledge of singing and the stars". Among his books was a Kitāb akhbār al-shu'arā' (Stories of the Poets).<sup>1/</sup>

'Alī ibn Yahyā ibn Abī Maṣṣūr <sup>(d. 888)</sup> was especially noted as a poet, musician, and reciter (rāwī) of verses and stories, all of which he learnt from Ishāq al-Maṣṣilī. At first, he attached himself to Muḥammad ibn Ishāq ibn Ibrāhīm al-Muṣā'ibī, the Governor of Fars, but finally he ~~accepted service~~ accepted service at the court of Al-Mutawakkil (847) and became his "boon companion". This position he held under successive Khalifs down to the time of Al-Mu'tamid (870). The Fihrist says, - "He used to sit in front of their thrones and they would impart to him their secrets". Ibn Khallikān says that "his skill lay particularly in vocal music, which had been taught him by Ishāq al-Maṣṣilī, with whom he was personally acquainted". Among his books were a Kitāb al-shu'arā' al-oudamā' wa'l-Islāmiyya (Book of Poets Ancient and Islāmic), and a Kitāb akhbār Ishāq ibn Ibrāhīm (Stories of Ishāq al-Maṣṣilī). His two sons, Yahyā and Hārūn, became famous authors.<sup>2/</sup>

1/ Al-Fihrist, # 143.

2/ Al-Fihrist, 143. Ibn Khallikān, ii, 312. Guidi, 500.



Yahyā ibn 'Alī ibn Yahyā ibn Abī Mansūr (856-912) was "boon companion" to Al-Muwaffaq, the brother of Khalif Al-Mu'tamid (870). He was ~~was~~ also a learned metaphysician of the Mu'tazalī school, an excellent poet, and a gifted musical theorist, well acquainted <sup>with</sup> the writings of the Greeks. Specimens of poetry delivered <sup>by</sup> by him before Al-Mu'tadid (892) and Al-Muktafi (902) have been preserved by Al-Mas'ūdī. <sup>1/</sup> Among his books were a Kitāb al-bāhir (Book of the Illuminating) on stories of the half-caste poets, <sup>2/</sup> and a Kitāb al-nagham (Book on the Notes). <sup>3/</sup> This latter is quoted by Al-Isfahānī as an important work. The British Museum has a Risāla fī'l-mūsīqī (Treatise on Music) from his pen which may be identical with the above work. <sup>4/</sup> Apparently he was also the author of a treatise on singing as well. <sup>5/</sup>

'Alī ibn Hārūn ibn 'Alī ibn Yahyā ibn Abī Mansūr (890-963), a nephew of the preceding, was "a reciter of poetry and a poet; learned, witty, a metaphysician, and a religious writer (hibrā')". He was \ "boon companion" to a number of the khalifs, and he wrote a musical work entitled, - Kitāb risāla fī'l-farq bain Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī wa Ishāq al-Mausilī fī'l-ghinā' (Treatise on the Difference between Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī and Ishāq al-Mausilī in the Song). <sup>2/</sup>

- 1/ Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 206, 222, 238. ~~~~~~~~~
- 2/ Al-Fihrist, 143.
- 3/ Al-Isfahānī, viii, 26. Al-Kāmil, viii, 57.
- 4/ Or. 2361, fol. 236, v.
- 5/ A passage in the British Museum MS. runs, - "We have mentioned in our book before this, the description of the singer, and what sort of man he must be, and we have described what is requisite in him for that".
- 2/ Al-Fihrist, 144.



Hārūn ibn 'Alī ibn Hārūn ibn Yahyā ibn Abī Mansūr was "a poet and learned man, pre-eminent in discourse, and acquainted with singing". He was the author of a kitāb mukhtār <sup>fi'l</sup>-agħanī (Book of Choice Songs).<sup>2/</sup>

The family of Tāhir, which furnished generals, prefects, governors, and statesmen for the Khalifate, were all keen patrons of music, and many of them clever musicians. The great Tāhir was the founder of the Tāhirid dynasty (820), and his son 'Abdallāh ibn Tāhir (d.844) was not only an open-handed supporter of music,<sup>1/</sup> but a clever performer, who sang his own compositions before Al-Ma'mūn. His two sons, Muḥammad and 'Ubaidallāh were great enthusiasts for the art.<sup>3/</sup>

'Ubaidallāh ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Tāhir (d.ca.912) was a "boon companion" of Al-Mu'tadid (892) and Al-Mu'tafī (902), and was Commander of the Police Guards at Baghdād. His life is given by Al-Isfahānī,<sup>X/</sup> where he is counted ~~among the~~ as "the first in the philosophy of music".<sup>4/</sup> His book, the Kitāb fi'l-nagham wa'-'alal al-agħanī al-musammā (Book on the Notes and the Denominated Songs),<sup>5/</sup> is placed among the chefs d'oeuvre of the theoretical and practical science of music of the day.<sup>6/</sup> We read of him and the sons of Ḥamdūn having correspondence with 'Abdallāh ibn al-Mu'tazz (who was also "clever in the science and art of music") on the question of certain notes in the ancient song.<sup>7/</sup>

Mansūr ibn Talḥa ibn Tāhir, a cousin of the preceding, was also a musical theorist, and the author of a Kitāb muḥis fi'l-mūsīqī qirā'a\ al-Kindī (Companion Book on Music in the Reading of Al-Kindī).<sup>ⓧ</sup>

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Fihrist, 144. <sup>1/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, xiv, 55.

<sup>3/</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, vii, 347-8. <sup>X/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 44-46.

<sup>4/</sup> That is to say, the "mathematics of music". Philosophy (falsafa) with the Arabs, included mathematics, logic, medicine, and the natural sciences.

<sup>5/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 45

<sup>6/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, viii, 54.

<sup>7/</sup> Al-Isfahānī, ix, 141.

<sup>ⓧ</sup> Al-Fihrist, 117.



(d. ca. 912)

Ibn Khurdādhbih<sup>1</sup> or Abū'l-Qāsim 'Ubaidallāh ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Khurdādhbih<sup>1</sup> was of Persian origin, his grandfather being a Magian converted to Islām by the Barmakids. His father was governor of Ṭabaristān, but 'Ubaidallāh was ~~was~~ educated in Baghdād, being instructed in music and belles lettres by Ishāq al-Mausilī. He was Director of the posts in ~~the~~ Al-Jibal (? Al-'Irāq), and was at Sāmarrā between 844 and 848, when he wrote his famous Kitāb al-masālik wa'l-mamālik (Book of Roads & Provinces). He afterwards became "boon companion" to Al-Mu'tamid (870), and "was intimate with him". It was before this Khalif that he gave his well-known oration on music, which, as reported by Al-Mas'ūdī, gives us details of the earliest traditions of Arabian music. Among his other books were a Kitāb adab al-samā' (Book of Liberal Education in Music), Kitāb al-lahw wa'l-malahī (Book of Diversion & Musical Instruments), & a Kitāb al-nudamā' wa'l-julasā' (Book of Boon Companions and Associates). Only the second of these works has been preserved today, and a solitary exemplar is in the library of Ḥabīb Afandī al-Zayyāt of Alexandria.<sup>M</sup>

Abū'l-Qāsim 'Abbās ibn Firnās, who ~~is~~ <sup>with</sup> identified ~~as~~ the poet of that name who died in 888,<sup>2</sup> was a man of considerable attainments in art, science, and literature. He is credited with being the "first who taught the science of music in Al-Andalus", and the first to introduce the science of prosody as laid down by Al-Khalīl.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Fihrist has Ahmad instead of 'Abdallāh.

<sup>M</sup> Al-Fihrist, 149. Hajjī Khalīfa, v, 509 (called Khurdādhbih).  
<sup>2</sup> See Goeje, Bibl. Geog. Arab., vi, Preface. Al-Hilāl, xxviii,

<sup>2</sup> Al-Maqqarī, Moh. Dyn., i, 426.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Maqqarī, Moh. Dyn., i, 148.



The family of Ḥamdūn were noted "boon companions" to the Khalifs. The first of them was Ḥamdūn ibn Ismā'īl ibn Dā'ūd al-Kātib, who was a pupil of Mukhāriq in music, and a great admirer of the songstress Shāriya.<sup>W/</sup> His three sons were well known at the courts for their literary and musical talents. Ahmad ibn Ḥamdūn was a chronicler of stories and the author of a Kitāb al-nudamā' wa'l-julasā' (Book of Boon Companions & Associates).<sup>3/</sup> Abū'l-'Ubay<sup>20</sup> ibn Ḥamdūn and Abū'l-'Anbās ibn Ḥamdūn <sup>M/</sup> were musicians at the court of Al-Mutawakkal (847). The family supported the Romantic School of Prince Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī.<sup>4/</sup>

Al-Ḥasan ibn Mūsā al-Naṣībī was the author of two musical works, a Kitāb al-aghānī 'alā'l-hurūf (Book of Songs in Alphabetical Order), and a Kitāb mujarradāt al-mughanniyīn (Book of the Singers Chosen). The former book was written for Al-Mutawakkal, and it is praised in the Fihrist because it contains information about the songs which had not been mentioned by Ishāq al-Mausilī nor by 'Amr ibn Bāna. It gave the names of the singers both male & female in the Days of Idolatry as well as in Islāmic times.<sup>5/</sup>

Ḥammād ibn Ishāq al-Mausilī was the son and grandson of two of the most famous musicians in Islām. He was a pupil and disciple of Abū 'Ubaida and Al-Aṣma'ī, and studied music under his father, who also taught him the sciences. Al-Sūlī says, - "He was a learned traditionist and shared with his father much of his (ability in) music". He wrote a

W/ Al-Iṣfahānī, viii, 168. ix, 35. xiv, 111.

3/ Al-Fihrist, 144.

M/ Al-Iṣfahānī, xii, 3. xx, 10-11.

4/ Al-Iṣfahānī, ix, 35.

5/ Al-Fihrist, 145.

Al-Iṣfahānī (See Gulist, 20).

2/ Al-Fihrist, 143.

1/ Al-Fihrist, 143.

Al-Iṣfahānī, xviii, 214. Ibn al-Nadīm, ii, 610.



number of books, mostly biographies of the poets. <sup>I/</sup> ~~~~~~~~~

Al-Madīnī, or Abū Ayyūb Sulaimān ibn Ayyūb ibn Muḥammad al-Madīnī, belonged, as his name tells us, to Al-Medīna. According to the Fihrist, he was "one of the ingeniously ~~learned~~ learned, acquainted with singing and with the stories of the singers". Among his books were, - Kitāb akhbār 'Azza al-Mailā' (Stories of 'Azza al-Mailā'), Kitāb Ibn Misjah (Book of Ibn Misjah), Kitāb qiyān al-Hijāz (Book of the Singing-Girls of Al-Hijāz), Kitāb qiyān Makka (Book of the Singing-Girls of Mecca), Kitāb ṭabaqāt al-mughanniyīn (B. of the Ranks of the Singers), Kitāb al-nagham wa'l-īqā' (Book of the Notes & Rhythm), Kitāb al-munādimīn (Book of Boon Companions), Kitāb akhbār Ibn 'Ā'isha (Stories of Ibn 'Ā'isha), Kitāb akhbār Hunain al-Hirī (Stories of Hunain al-Hirī), Kitāb Ibn Suraij (Book of Ibn Suraij), and a Kitāb Al-Gharīd. <sup>2/</sup>

Ibn Tarkhān, or Abū'l-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn ~~Abū~~ Ḥasan, was a good singer and littérateur, and among his books was one entitled the Kitāb akhbār al-mughanniyīn al-ṭunbūriyyīn (Book of Stories of the Singers of the Ṭunbūrists). <sup>S/</sup>

Al-Dubbī <sup>(d. 920)</sup> or Abū'l-Tayyib Muḥammad ibn al-Mufaḍḍal ibn Salama al-Dubbī, was an eminent Shāfi'ī doctor of Baghdād and a renowned philologist who had studied under ~~~~~~~~~ Ibn al-A'rābī, who had been a pupil of his father. Among his works is a Kitāb al-'ūd wa'l-malāhī (Book on the lute and Musical Instruments), a solitary exemplar of which is preserved at Cairo. <sup>A/</sup>

1. Al-Fihrist, 142-3. Al-Isfahanī (See Guidi, 307).

2. Al-Fihrist, 148.

S. Al-Fihrist, 156.

A. Al-Hilāl, xxviii, 214. Ibn Khallikān, ii, 610.



One of the features of the period was the contribution of the Greek Scholiasts to the theoretical art. Following in the footsteps of the scholars of the Bait al-hikma, the Banū Mūsā, and Al-Kindī, there came Al-Sarakhsī, Thābit ibn Qurra, Qusṭā ibn Lūqā, Muḥammad ibn Zakariyyā al-Rāzī, and Al-Fārābī.

Unfortunately, the order of the Khalīf was accused against him, on account of a secret having been betrayed, and he was put to death, his property valued at 150,000 pieces of silver being confiscated. Al-Sarakhsī, like his master Al-Kindī, was learned in most of the sciences, including mathematics, logic, astronomy, philosophy, and music; and he left more than thirty works on these subjects. Among his theoretical works on music were, a Kitāb al-muqaddimāt (Introduction to the Science of Music), Kitāb al-muqaddimāt al-kubrā (Great Book on Music), Kitāb al-muqaddimāt al-saghir (Lesser Book on Music). Unlike a number of the scientific writers on music of the period, he was keenly interested in the practical side of the art, as we are told by Al-Jahizī, and he penned such works as, Kitāb al-ṭawṣiyyāt al-ṣābiḥ (Book of Joy and Diversion for the Song and the Singer), a Kitāb muḥit al-mufakkir al-ṣābiḥ (A Comprehensive Book for the Perplexed concerning the Singers, the Song, and Musical Instruments), and a Kitāb al-dalālat (A Guide to the Secrets of Singing).

Colinvaux (362) and Roussel (Lavigerie, v, 267) write Sarakhsī.

Arrested 800, he languished in prison until 830.

Al-Fihrist, 149, 261, Ibn al-Nadīm, 114, 115, Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 179. Al-Jahizī, viii, 267, 268. Casiri, i, 400. Al-Nadīm, Fihrist, No. 6519, 123.

Hajj Khalifa, v, 161.



Al-Sarakhsī (d. 899) or Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Marwān al-Sarakhsī, <sup>I</sup> also called Ahmad ibn al-Tayyib, was the greatest pupil of Al-Kindī and was known as Tilmīdh al-Kindī (Pupil of Al-Kindī). He was born at Sarakhs in Khurāsān, and became tutor to the son of Al-Muwaffaq, who afterwards became Khalif Al-Mu'tadid (892), who made him a member of his suite and Director of Weights and Measures in Baghdād. Unfortunately, the choler of the Khalif was aroused against him, on account of a secret having been betrayed, and he was put to death, his property valued at 150,000 pieces of silver being confiscated. <sup>S</sup> Al-Sarakhsī, like his master Al-Kindī, was learned in most of the sciences, including mathematics, logic, astronomy, philosophy, and music, and he left more than thirty works on these subjects. Among his theoretical works on music were, a Kitāb al-madkhal ilā 'ilm al-mūsīqī (Introduction to the Science of Music), Kitāb al-mūsīqī al-kabīr (Grand Book on Music), Kitāb al-mūsīqī al-saghīr (Lesser Book on Music). Unlike a number of the scientific writers on music of the period, he was keenly interested in the practical side of the art, as we are told by Al-Isfahānī, and he penned such works as, - Kitāb al-lahw wa'l-malāhī fī'l-ghinā' wa'l-mughanniyīn..... (Book of Joy and Diversion in the Song and the Singers), <sup>4c.</sup> a Kitāb nuzat al-mufakkir al-sāhī fī'l-mughanniyīn wa'l-ghinā' wa'l-malāhī (Diversion for the ~~unhappy~~ Perplexed <sup>Thinker</sup> concerning the Singers, the Song, and Musical Instruments), and a Kitāb al-dalālat 'alā asrār al-ghinā' (Guidance in the Secrets of Singing). <sup>X</sup>

<sup>I</sup> Collangettes (382) and Rouanet (Lavignac, v, 2679) write Sarshārdhī.

<sup>S</sup> Arrested 896, he languished in prison until 899.

<sup>X</sup> Al-Fihrist, 149, 261. Ibn Abī Usaibi'a, [214. 1.] Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 179. Al-Isfahānī, viii, 54. xix, 136. Casiri, i, 406. Ahlwardt, Verz., No. 5536, (2).

Hajjī Khalifa, v, 161.



Thābit ibn Qurra Abū'l-Hasan (836-901) was a Ṣābīan of Harrān in Mesopotamia. He was one of the most brilliant of the scholars of his day who studied the "exact sciences" including music. Owing to his rationalism, he was persecuted, and finally was driven into retirement at Kafartūthā. Here he met Muḥammad ibn Mūsā ibn Shākir, who brought him to ~~Baghdād~~ <sup>Baghdād</sup>, <sup>X/</sup> where he was enabled to devote himself to scientific study. He became the greatest mathematician of the age, and was the first to apply algebra to geometry. Among his music books were the following, — Kitāb fī 'ilm al-mūsīqī (B. on the Science of Music), Maqāla fī'l-mūsīqī (Discourse on Music), <sup>X</sup> and a Kitāb al-mūsīqī (Book of Music). Ḥajjī Khalīfa mentions a work entitled Kitāb fī'l-mūsīqī in fifteen sections, which may be identical with the last named. <sup>2/</sup> <sup>(Some of)</sup> these works were known to the practical musicians of the day. <sup>3/</sup>

Qustā ibn Lūqā al-Ba'lbakī (d.932) was a Christian of Ba'lbak in Syria, "who greatly excelled in the science of medicine, philosophy, geometry, arithmetic, numerals, and music", and was the author of original works on these sciences. Casiri mentions a liber de musica by him, which, in the Arabic text is a Kitāb al-qarastūn, and concerns mechanics. <sup>X/</sup> His translations from the Greek were of inestimable value to succeeding generations. <sup>M/</sup>

Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Zakariyyā al-Rāzī (d.923) was born <sup>(at Raiy.)</sup> ~~at Raiy.~~ Abū Dā'ūd ibn Juljul says

<sup>X/</sup> He is said to have introduced him to Khalīf Al-Mu'tadīd (892), but this is an error, since Muḥammad died in 873.

<sup>2/</sup> Al-Fihrist, i, 272. Casiri, i, <sup>(390-1.)</sup> ~~272~~. Ibn Khallikān, i, 288. Ibn Abī Usaibi'a, i, 216. Ḥajjī Khalīfa, v, 161.

<sup>3/</sup> Al-Isfahanī, viii, 54. [Ibr al-Fifti, 115.

<sup>X/</sup> See Dozy, Suppl. Dict. Arabes. Cf. Wüstenfeld, Gesch. der arab. Aerzte u. Naturforscher, 50. Leclerc, i, 159.

<sup>M/</sup> Casiri, i, 420. Al-Fihrist, 295. Ibn Abī Usaibi'a, i, 244.

Ibr al-Fifti, 262.

Kitāb fī 'ilm al-mūsīqī  
(Book of the Wind Instrument)



that Al-Rāzī was a practical musician who "in his youth played on the lute (ūd) and cultivated vocal music". In his twentieth year however, he forsook these things and came to Baghdād to study the sciences. Here, he became the pupil of 'Alī ibn Sahl ibn Rabban, the personal physician to Al-Mu'tasim (833). Later, Al-Rāzī became Director of the Baghdād Hospital, and was considered the greatest medical authority of his time. For centuries his works were the textbooks for European doctors. Finally, he rose to be a court dignitary with the Sāmānid prince Al-Manṣūr ibn Ishāq, to whom he dedicated his great medical treatise the Mansūrī.<sup>3/</sup> Although Kieseewetter says that he left no works on music,<sup>≡</sup> Leclerc, the medical historian, mentions a "Compendium on Music".<sup>2/</sup> This probably refers to the Kitāb <sup>fi jūmal</sup> al-mūsīqī (Book of Music) mentioned by Ibn Abī Usaibi'a.<sup>≡</sup> The works in the Paris Bibliothèque Nationale have been wrongly attributed to Al-Rāzī.<sup>H/</sup>

Al-Fārābī (870-950?) or Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn Tarkhān was of Turkish origin, and was born at Fārāb in Transoxiana. Coming to Baghdād, he studied philosophy under Abū Bishr Mattā ibn Yūnis, and later went to Harrān to prosecute studies under Yūhannā ibn Khailān. Having mastered all the sciences of the Greeks, he soon surpassed ~~was~~ his contemporaries.<sup>0/</sup> We are told that he was "a perfect and erudite musician",<sup>W/</sup> and "an excellent performer on the lute (ūd)".<sup>X/</sup> His fame in music led Saif al-Daula the Ḥamdānid ~~to~~ to

- ~~W. Abū'l-Fidā', Annales Moslem.,~~  
~~2/ Leclerc, I, 353.~~ ~~X/ Ibn Ghaibī, Sharn al-adwār.~~  
~~3/ Ibn Abī Usaibi'a, i, 309. ~~Al-Fihrist, 299.~~ (2679.)~~  
~~H/ Cf. Collangettes, 384. Lavignac's Ency. de la musique, v, See my article Some Musical MSS Identified, J.R.A.S. Jan., 1926.~~  
~~0/ It is alleged that he was educated in Al-Andalus (See Soriano-Fuertes, I, 82, F. Salvador Daniel, 145) but this is probably erroneous. Another writer actually makes him a Spanish Arab (Saldoni, Diccionario... de músicos españoles), whilst Lichtenthal, Diz. e Bib. d. Mus.) and S.M. Tagore (Universal History of Music, 101) make him a khalif.~~



invite him to Aleppo. Here the great philosopher and music theorist attracted pupils from all parts, who thronged to his lectures which were held in the delightful gardens on the outskirts of the town. He wrote on logic, ~~ethics~~, ethics, politics, mathematics, alchemy, philosophy, and music. Many of these works, translated into Latin, had an immense influence on European culture during the Middle Ages. He has been called "The greatest philosopher the Arabs ever produced",<sup>4/</sup> and the "Orpheus of Arabia".<sup>5/</sup>

Among his musical writings were, - the kitāb al-mūsīqī al-kabīr (Grand Book on Music), Kalām fī'l-mūsīqā (?) (Conversations on Music), kitāb fī'inhā' al-īqā' (Book on the Classification of Rhythm), kitāb fī'l-nuqra (nuqla) mudāfa ilā al-īqā' ((Supplementary Enquiry Concerning Rhythm), Sharḥ kitāb al-samā' al-tabi'ī (Commentary on the Nature of Sound), Sharḥ kitāb al-samā' wa'l-'alām (Commentary on Sound and ~~the Universe~~), and a kitāb al-samā' al-tabi'ī (Book on the Nature of Sound).

The Kitāb al-mūsīqī al-kabīr which was written for the wazīr Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim, is "the most important treatise on the theory of oriental music".<sup>I/</sup> Three copies of this ~~important treatise~~ valuable work have been preserved at Madrid, Leyden, and Milan. The Madrid copy, which dates prior to 1138, was probably made for the celebrated Ibn Bājja (Avenpace),<sup>X/</sup> and it bears the title Kitāb istudisāt 'ilm al-mūsīqī (Book of ~~principles of~~ the Science of Music).<sup>W/</sup> The Milan copy dates from 1349,<sup>4/</sup>

4/ Ibn Khallikān, iii, 146. 5/ Steinschneider, Al-Fārābī, 79.

I/ Ency. of Islām, II, 54.

X/ Derenbourg, in Homenaje á D. Franc. Codera, 612.

W/ Robles, Catalogo, No. 602. Casiri, No. 906.

4/ No. 298. Biblioteca Italiana, T. xciv. Cf. Kieewetter, viii.



and the Leyden copy from 1537 (copied from one dated 1089),<sup>3/</sup> and both bear the title of Kitāb al-mūsīqī.

The treatise is divided into two parts, (1) An Introduction to the Art of Music (al-madkhal fi'l-sinā'a) and (2) On the Art of Music Itself (al-sinā'a nafsinā), which deals with Sound (saut), Intervals (ab'ād), Genres (ajnas), Systems (jumū'), Musical Instruments (ālāt), and the Principles of Composition (tā'lif), including Melodic Construction (intiqālāt) and Rhythm (īqā'). Portions of this work, both in text and translation, have been given by Kosegarten in his Alii Ispananensis Liber Cantilenarum Magnus (1840-43?), and his Ueber die Benennung einiger Bunde auf dem Griffbrette der Arabischen Laute (1850), Soriano Fuertes' Musica Arabe Española y Conexión de la música con la astronomía, medicina y arquitectura (1854), and Land's Recherches sur l'histoire de la gamme arabe (1884).<sup>1/</sup>

Al-Fārābī ~~was born~~ wrote a second portion to his Kitāb al-mūsīqī, which has not come down to us. It comprised four ~~chapters~~ chapters (maqālāt), and in it he says,—"I have commented on what was obscure in their sayings (the ancient greeks), and I have examined the opinion of one after another of those whom we knew as holding an opinion which was set down in a book. And I have explained the value of what each of these attained.....in this science, and I have rectified the errors of those who have fallen into error". In short, it was a critical review of the theory of the Greeks,<sup>2/</sup> as well perhaps, as that of the earlier Arab theorists.<sup>3/</sup>

<sup>3/</sup> No. 1425, Cat. Cod. Orient. Bibl. Acad. Lugdun.

<sup>1/</sup> Fétis (Biog. Univ. des Mus.) and Mitjana (Le monde orientale, 1906, p.195) say that a Latin translation of a part of the Kitāb al-mūsīqī was made by Jerome of Prague, but see my Arabian Influence on Musical Theory, p. 15-16.

<sup>2/</sup> Munk, Mélanges, 350.

<sup>3/</sup> Kosegarten, Ueber die Benennung, 150, 159.



It was suggested by Kosegarten,<sup>A/</sup> Land,<sup>B/</sup> and Tripodo,<sup>C/</sup> that a MS mentioned by Toderini,<sup>D/</sup> entitled the Majal al-mūsīqī (Arena of Music) preserved in the library of 'Abd al-Hamīd at Constantinople, was perhaps the lost second portion of the Kitāb al-mūsīqī. But the title given by them was clearly an error for the Madkhal al-mūsīqī,<sup>5/</sup> of which, copies existed in the 'Abd al-Hamīd library,<sup>X/</sup> as well as in other collections in Constantinople such as the Rāghib Pāshā,<sup>6/</sup> Ahmad III,<sup>7/</sup> and 'Ashīr Afandī libraries.<sup>8/</sup> There is also a copy in the British Museum.<sup>M/</sup>

((p. 350))

Munk<sup>X/</sup> was of opinion that the lost work was the one that Andres refers to in his Origine e Progressi d'ogni Letteratura. This is also incorrect, since Andres says that his information was based on particulars obtained from Casiri of a MS in the Escorial, and Toderini gives a letter from Casiri to Andres which describes the Al-Fārābī MS in the Escorial, and, from the details, it is identical with the first portion of the Kitāb al-mūsīqī already described.

In his Kitāb fī inṣā' al-'ulūm there is a section devoted to music. This work was translated into Latin, and is frequently quoted by Mediaeval writers.<sup>W/</sup> Another work

(cf. Lib. Cant., 35)

A/ Kosegarten, Ueber die Benennung. ~~Ueber die Benennung~~

B/ Land, Recherches, 43. In his Earliest Development, he was of opinion that it had perished.

C/ Tripodo, Lo Stato, 13. D/ Toderini, Lett. Turch., i, 233.

5/ The original Italian edition of Toderini has medchal ul-musiki, which is clearly intended for madkhal al-mūsīqī. It was perhaps, the transliteration of the German edition which led these savants to imagine a majal al-mūsīqī (madjāl-e'l-mousiqi).

6/ Hajjī Khalīfa, vii, 318. See Daftari kutubkhāna (Stambūl).

7/ Hajjī Khalīfa, vii, 400. 8/ Hajjī Khalīfa, vii, 453.

X/ Hajjī Khalīfa, vii, 520.

M/ Or. 2361, fol.

W/ See my Arabian Influence on Musical Theory, pp. 15-21.

word  
in the



attributed to Al-Fārābī, but not mentioned under this ~~title~~  
title by his biographers, is a Kitāb al-adwār, which is in  
the library of ~~Aḥmad~~ <sup>a certain</sup> Timūr. ~~A~~

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~~~~~~~~~  
~~~~~~~~~ <sup>by</sup> ~~~~~~~~~ <sup>~~~~~</sup>

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~~A~~. Al-Hilāl, xxviii, 214.

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~~~~~ <sup>~~~~~</sup> ~~~~~, 11, 264. ~~~~~, 109.  
~~~~~ ~~~~~, ~~~~~, 214.